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THE

CORRESPONDENT.

FROM

JANUARY 26, 1828, TO JULY 19, 1828.

Magua est Veritas et prevalebit.

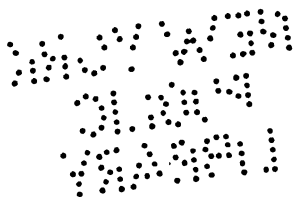
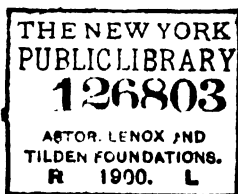
VOL. III.

NEW YORK :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY GEO. HOUSTON & CO.

422 BROADWAY.

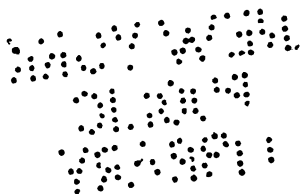
1828.



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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 1.

NEW YORK, JANUARY 26, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. Editor—Accompanying this, you have a work of lord Bolingbroke, entitled "The Important Examination of the Holy Scriptures," originally written in French, and first published in 1736. I observe that a translation of this work appeared in London, in 1819, printed by Mr. Carlile, who supposed it to have been from the pen of Voltaire. I have examined the French copy, but I can discover nothing there to warrant the opinion that it is a production of the philosopher of Ferney. Some passages, undoubtedly, remind us of the piquant style of this great man. As a whole, however, it does not seem to justify the attributing it to his pen. Besides, his works have been collected, and "the Important Examination" forms no part of the collection. I have no doubt its appearance in the *Correspondent* will gratify a large portion of your readers.

ARISTIDES.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Preface.—The ambition of domineering over the mind is one of the strongest passions. A theologian, a missionary, or a partisan of any description, is always for conquering like a prince, and there are many more sects than there are sovereigns in the world. To whose guidance shall I submit my mind? Must I be a Christian, because I happened to be born in London, or in Madrid? Must I be a Mussulman, because I was born in Turkey? As it is myself alone that I ought to consult, the choice of a religion is my greatest interest. One man adores God by Mahomet, another by the Grand Lama, and another by the pope. Weak and foolish men! adore God by your own reason.

The stupid indolence which takes possession of the generality of men, and sets aside this most important of all concerns, seems to intimate that they are nothing but stupid machines, endowed with animal functions, whose instinct never occupies itself beyond the present moment. We make use of our understandings in the same way as we use our bodies: both are frequently abandoned to quacks, whose chief concern is to get possession of our money.

The prodigious multitude of Christian sects already forms a great presumption that they are all founded on erroneous systems. The wise man says to himself—"If God had intended us to render him any particular worship, this worship would have been necessary to our species. If this worship were necessary, he himself would have communicated it to each of us, as invariably as he has given us two eyes and one mouth." This worship would likewise have been uniform, since we have not been able

to discover any thing necessary to the human race that does not possess this uniformity. The universal principles of reason are common to all civilized nations; all acknowledge a deity; and they may thence infer, that this belief is founded in truth. But each nation has a different religion; they ought, therefore, to conclude, that reason tells them to adore a god; but that they have uniformly fallen into errors by wishing to overstep the bounds prescribed them.

The principle, then, in which the whole universe is in agreement, appears to be true. Other principles, whose consequences are diametrically opposite, must appear to be false, and it is natural for us to mistrust them. We have a still greater diffidence when we find that the sole aim of those at the head of each sect is to domineer and enrich themselves as much as they can; and that, from the dairis of Japan to the bishop of Rome, they are occupied in raising to the Pontiff a throne founded on the misery of the people, and often cemented with their blood.

Let the Japanese, then, examine how long the dairis have held them in subjection; let the Tartars make use of their reason in order to judge whether the Grand Lama be immortal; give the Turks permission to judge their Alcoran, and let us, as Christians, examine our gospels.

I have learnt that a French vicar, of the name of John Meslier, who died a short time since, prayed on his death bed that God would forgive him for having taught Christianity. I have seen a vicar in Dorsetshire relinquish a living of £200 a year, and confess to his parishoners, that his conscience would not permit him to preach the shocking absurdities of the Christians. But neither the will or testament of John Meslier, nor the declaration of this worthy vicar, are what I consider decisive proofs. Uriel Acosta, a Jew, publicly renounced the Old Testament in Amsterdam; however, I pay no more attention to the Jew Acosta than to parson Meslier. I will read the arguments on both sides of the trial, with careful attention, not suffering the lawyers to tamper with me; but will weigh before God the reasons of both parties, and decide according to my conscience. I commence by being my own instructor.

Of the Books of Moses.—Christianity is founded on Judaism; let us, then, examine if Judaism be the work of God. The books of Moses are handed to me, and the first point I have to ascertain is, whether or not these books were actually written by Moses?

In the first place. Is it possible that Moses could have engraven the Pentateuch, or the books of the law, on stone, and that he found engravers and stone cutters in a frightful wilderness, where, it is said, his people had neither tailors, shoemakers, raiment, nor bread; and where God was compelled to work a continued miracle, for the space of forty years, in order to clothe and feed them?

Secondly. The book of Joshua tells us that Deuteronomy was written on an altar of rough stone, (Joshua viii. 31, 32,) covered over with plaster. How could a whole book be written on plaster? Would not the letters soon be effaced by the blood which continually flowed on this altar? And how could this altar, this monument of Deuteronomy, subsist so long, in a country where the Jews had been such a length of time reduced to a state of slavery, which their plunders had so fully justified?

Thirdly. The innumerable geographical and chronological errors and contradictions which we find in the Pentateuch, have compelled many, both Jews and Christians, to declare, that the Pentateuch could not have been written by Moses. The learned Le Clerc, a number of divines, even our great Newton, have embraced this opinion, which appears, at least, very probable.

I likewise ask any reasonable man, if it be at all likely that Moses, when he was in the wilderness, would have given precepts for Jewish kings, who did not exist for several centuries after him; and if it be possible that, when in the same wilderness, he could have allotted forty-eight cities and their suburbs to the tribe of the Levites alone, independent of the tenths which the other tribes ought to pay them? It is, doubtless, very natural to suppose that the priests would lay hold of every thing, but we cannot imagine that they had forty-eight cities given them, in a little canton where at that time two villages scarcely existed: as many cities would, at least, have been necessary for each of the other Jewish tribes, and the whole would have amounted to four hundred and eighty cities with their suburbs. The Jews have not written their history in any other manner. Each trait is a ridiculous hyperbole, a stupid falsehood, or an absurd fable.

To be continued.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Mr. Editor—This hitherto mysterious problem, which for more than two hundred years has been, and which still continues to the present day a subject of dispute, has caused the sacrifice of thousands of lives. It is, however, a very true doctrine, and although misunderstood, or perverted to another meaning, will, when explained, show that its original author was a good physiologist, and well understood the doctrine of Nature. The real meaning of it is this:

Mankind are composed entirely of what they eat and drink, and nothing more. By the operations of Nature, a part of their bodies return daily to the earth and helps to produce vegetation, which supports both man and beast. Every man therefore is constantly in the habit of eating, not only a part of the vegetable and brute creation, but also a part of his own species, and even a part of himself!

A good naturalist, then, would say to his disciples, When ye eat this bread, my friends, ye eat my body, and when ye drink, ye drink my blood, for I am composed wholly of victuals and drink, and nothing else: not a particle of any other thing is in my body which daily returns to the earth; and whenever ye eat and drink from the earth, therefore, ye eat and drink a part of me, or the element of which I am, or have been, composed: and as often as ye sit down at meals, I charge you to remember this doctrine which I now teach you. Although when I be dead, and appear to be gone, I shall be still with you. You shall see the son of man, hereafter, coming in the clouds with great power; power to produce vegetation, which will save all mankind from starving. And verily, I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass away before all which I have taught you shall be fulfilled. Such would be the language

of a true disciple of Nature, which shows, that transubstantiation is not performed by the priest, but by the brewers and bakers, turning the body of man into food.

Some unbelievers say, that the son of man did not rise from the dead on the third day: whereas, on the contrary, I feel certain that he did. Man is composed wholly of water. I feel, therefore, no hesitation in saying, that, by evaporation, he absconded, partly, as early as the second day. Some are so hardened as to assert that the son of man will never be seen coming in the clouds; and others of a contrary opinion, are so stupid as to suppose that it will be some centuries before he is here. But as to myself, I can see him almost every day. Mankind seem much alarmed about his coming; though, indeed, we should have been in a sorry plight if he had not been here before now; for, as sure as we are men, we should have been all starved.

Do we not perceive, then, that however much this doctrine may have been ridiculed by some, it is nevertheless perfectly consistent with natural philosophy? Almost every thing has been perverted from its original meaning, so that we know not what theory may have been left us at first for our instruction. The word *gentleman*, for instance, at the commencement of the Christian era, was applied by Christians to such men as had embraced Christianity, but who still retained, in other respects, their pagan customs. The orthography of the word was afterwards altered to *gentleman*, and is now applied to such people only as have got plenty of money. Again, taking off hats was practised among the early Christians to ascertain their own numbers, while disputing in the temple with the Jews, who kept their hats on. Afterwards, when the religious animosity increased, it became out doors a signal to distinguish friends from foes. But in process of time, when Christians grew too numerous to fear opposition, the rich contemned the friendly signal of their forefathers: so that when the poor man took off his hat, signifying "I am a Christian," the rich one merely nodded his head, as much as to say, "I see what you are," and contemptuously walked on. So now the poor Christian, and even those who do not believe in Christianity also, are expected to submit to this perverted habit. When, therefore, we see such changes wrought in other customs, who will attempt to prove that the Roman church did not twist the simple doctrine of Nature from its original meaning, and that the real presence of a deceased man, in our common ailments, was not at first taught, as I have above described?

CANDID.

RELIGIOUS BODIES.

Mr. Editor—The real actuating force which gives credit to religious deeds is public opinion. There cannot be a more effectual spur to this popular sentiment than the formation of a body whose peculiar interest lies in watching its various turns, in kindling it anew, and dexterously diversifying its applications. For this task they possess numerous advantages. The necessity of recurring to their services on many occasions ensures to them a large measure of respect, as well as of wealth, and this reacts upon the function which they exercise. They labor se-

dulously to inculcate the deepest reverence in speaking of religious matters, as well as extreme backwardness and timidity of soul in subjecting them to the examination of reason. They diffuse widely among the community those pious misapplications of moral epithets which are inseparably annexed to the belief in an omnipotent being, availing themselves of this confusion of language to stigmatize as iniquitous every thing which counteracts their own views, and to extol as virtuous that which favors them.

The religious premium offered for faith tends to corrupt the judgment of individuals, and to foist in, by means of their hopes and partiality, a belief which unbiassed reason would not have tolerated. The penalties denounced against unbelief cooperate most powerfully, by enlisting their fears in behalf of the same self-deceit or hypocrisy.

BEAUCHAMP.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 1828.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

ON THE ASSERTION, THAT "RELIGION IS THE BOND OF SOCIETY."

By H. A. Fay.

Ladies and Gentlemen—I believe our object in assembling at this time is to pass an hour or two agreeably. If there are any present who, from an honest zeal in the cause of any particular sect; any who apprehend shipwreck to the ship of state from our investigations; any of that licentious class whose disorderly propensities compel them to be in continual broils, and who, as disturbers of the public peace, entail on themselves public execration and ignominious punishment—if any of these variously inclined personages have come here for the purpose of interrupting our proceedings, it is needless for me to deprecate their hostile intentions. I caution them that there is one restraint which will operate on their attempts to be found in the moral influence of the majority of respectable people who are in the habit of attending our meetings. In addition to this, we are under the protection of the laws, as exercising that reason, and those moral energies, which the heroes of the revolution fought to secure. Need I add, that we are especially guarded by the police of the city, to which power must certainly be committed any one who, either from mistaken motives, from malice, or licentiousness, disturbs the harmony of this respectable audience.

I address myself to the ear of every dispassionate and unprejudiced inquirer after truth, and declare that the opinions I advance are the result of much meditation. It is with sincerity that I speak; nor would I lip to another idea, which I thought calculated to create unnecessary pain, or inconsistent with the welfare of my fellow creatures. For my own sentiments I do not claim particular attention, nor do I obtrude them into notice. The members of the "Free Press Association"—at least I believe so, and for myself can answer confidently—desire the establishment of an institution where the most important subjects relating to general interest shall be freely discussed. We give notice to the public that

a lecture is delivered in this place every Sunday; and, as crowded audiences attend, it is but reasonable to suppose that satisfaction has been created. This rostrum is successively filled by speakers who are willing to take their part in our public discourses. It is with the concurrence of my much esteemed fellow members that I now address you.

The subject which I have chosen, namely, "Religion's being the bond of society," is an idea which governs the actions of many liberal, honest men, but whose business engrosses too much of their attention to leave them leisure for investigating: it is well worthy of discussion.

Religion—I looked in Ash's dictionary for his definition of the word. It is this: "Religion (from the Latin *Religio*, to bind fast.) The true fear of God in the heart. A particular system of divine faith and worship." It is generally said the fear of hell is necessary to restrain the vicious propensities of human beings, and the hope of heaven to stimulate to active virtue; and that without these inducements anarchy would result. Many schemes appear calculated to counteract evil, which, when put in operation, are inefficient. A religion has been entailed upon almost every nation; the parts of the system successively added through the lapse of ages, by speculators, enthusiasts, and the ambitious. It has generally been connected with the political government. The page of history is before you. Look at it. What have been the effects of "the true fear of God in the heart?" What kind of society has it been the bond of?

In the Bible we read that Judaism, the supposed bond of the Hebrews, bound them to murder every gentile nation, and occupy their desolated cities. It bound Moses, and David, and Solomon & Co., the very best men that Judaism could produce, to stab and burn thousands of their own subjects under pretence of their bond of society. Change the names; substitute successively for Moses, David, & Co. those of Mahomet and other religious leaders, and, in their respective nations, we read in history that it is a Turkish bond, a Christian bond, a Hindoo bond, or other bond or religion, that has armed one portion of society against another; nation against nation; a monarch against his people, and a people against their monarch, in one almost uninterrupted war and massacre for many thousand years. As long as different systems of faith prevail, there must be bloodshed. Suppose Christianity should pervade the world, still there would be the numerous sects of Christians; catholic, episcopalian, presbyterian, baptist, methodist, universalist, unitarian, new jerusalemite, quaker, shaker, moravian, tunker, dipper, dunker, and dumper—though the four last, *vide* the Rev. Jedediah Morse, are pretty much the same: and there is a host of others. Every verse in the holy Bible has generated a swarm of these bonds of society.

Sad, bitter experience tells us, that one sect in the same nation will be in hostility, will persecute, will murder, those of another sect; and yet why do these different sects remain under one government? It is not their faith that binds them to each other, for they differ. The bond of society is the fears and wants of individuals: it is this bond of mutual protection that binds together the different and hostile sects, and even conflicting religions and philosophies, as Judaism, Christianity, deism, athe-

ism, and materialism. It is here an individual may say, I have a home, my friends, my country.

Has religion been the cause of more murders than it has saved lives? So many religions have been tried for so many thousand years, that it is worth while to ask the question. I leave it for the sincere and honest to answer.

A bond of society! Yes, indeed, it has been a bond. It is the invisible chain which binds binds the wretched Hindoo to the ground, while the car of Jaggernaut rolls over his mangled limbs. It is a bond which once fastened the human mind to the papal throne, and only permitted its exertions as the menial to fetch and carry for beings called popes, among whom has been found a creature the most debased, vicious, and accursed of the human race; in whose bloated and nauseous person was found the essence, the very distilled noxiousness, of every crime that a man could commit; of every hideous and disgusting disease that matter in the human form could contain, without becoming instantaneously a mere unshaped mass of corruption.

Bond of society! Yes, all of us are bound by religion. We may throw up our hands, spring from the ground, run to the mountains, the ocean, and yet, I say, we are bound, hand and foot, heart and head. There are abroad, even in this free country, bonds, unseen, but not unfelt—fettters! mental fetters! which you cannot touch. If I could, I would burst them asunder. If we are free, why is it that in our houses, our streets, whenever the subject of religion is accidentally touched upon by one individual, the manly, loud, firm, and clear tone of a freeman's voice sinks to a low mutter; and the eye which, from an intelligent being, in the midst of an intelligent people, who profess to have no masters or superiors in rank; that eye which should send around a glance of confident security, cowers as if in fear, and scrutinizes every surrounding countenance; that eye, like the trembling spy of a lurking assassin band, conveys to the reason or mind, that leader of man's energies, the assurance that all is safe, and then the speaker whispers his opinion, as if it was a deed of danger, congenial to mystery, darkness, and horror.

When I think of these things, I ask myself if our government does not secure freedom of opinion and action, when it does not interfere with the substantial happiness of others? I am answered, that religion is *necessary* for the vulgar; that it is a pity to destroy the only consolation of the pious in this miserable world, and that it is the bond of society, even if false.

Religion necessary for the vulgar! This is the tyrant's plea, who riots in human blood, shed to procure him the luxuries of a throne or an altar, and who wishes to keep the mass of mankind his slaves; to waste their energies in toiling for him, pass their time in praising him, and fighting for him under the names of country and religion. Give the vulgar good habits by a proper education, and they are no longer vulgar; but are, as our glorious constitution guarantees, a nation of monarchs, each having a voice in the national councils, as equal rulers of this prosperous land.

But, "it is a pity to destroy the only consolation of the pious." Private considerations must yield to public ones. Questions which concern

the public welfare always will be debated in free countries, and philosophical inquiries unavoidably occasion the dispersion of many fondly cherished illusions and confiding hopes which rest but on doubtful foundations. What reason, then, remains to make it criminal to investigate the truth of the numerous mythologies, which have brooded for so many ages over our moral world, and which have hatched in their foul nests so many bloody crimes? I sincerely declare that I believe there is no paramount reason for silence, but that this bond of society, this mysterious and intangible influence, like the nightmare, presses the brain and the heart, stupifies and deadens all exertion, and makes even free born American descendants of the revolutionary heroes who fought the lion of England and the wild man of the woods to make us free; I say, makes many of the citizens of this country skulk along through life the slaves of superstition, never venturing a thought, or daring to question the immaculateness of a book, called the *holy Bible*, till some bolder and worthier sons of heroic sires lead the way.

Is there no such thing as truth? Are there no principles to regulate our conduct unless we have faith in some mystery, certain unintelligible portions of which we must believe, contrary to the order of Nature, were revealed to bad men in dreams, visions, by witches, wizards, ghosts, angels, devils, &c.

Speaking for my individual experience, I can say, I have found real enjoyment in proportion as I have been sincere, kind, charitable, industrious, temperate, prudent, and cultivated all the social virtues. If bishops, prelates of every kind, members of churches, priests and high priests, either Turkish, Christian, or Jewish, or any other kind, cannot make themselves or congregations good by threatening hell fire and promising paradise, I recommend them to try these little, simple practices of honesty, integrity, temperance, industry, and universal benevolence; and, perhaps, the shepherds and their flocks may become both habitually more virtuous and happy. They may not become quite so rich or powerful, or receive as much abject servility, but I humbly conceive they will sleep as sound, eat with as good an appetite, and enjoy existence as much as ever.

Bond of society! I always thought a bond was something which united individuals in harmony; but religion is an exception to this species of bonds: it is a bond which disunites, divides our citizens into sects, whose hearts nourish towards each other rancor, hate, jealousy, and numerous ugly passions; irritates brother against sister, husband and wife against each other. This bond of godliness arms the mob, the city, the majority of the population, in conscious holiness against a member of society, who possesses courage and candor. It makes candor a crime, and courage an accumulation of guilt. The unhappy wretch who has the misfortune to be honest, is accused of want of principle; if he is a member of the "Free Press Association," that caps the climax of atrocity. A name like the cry of mad dog. It is atheist! atheist! and the stigma seems to engender a poisonous exhalation from the very body; an infected atmosphere surrounds the victim of religious fanaticism. Wherever the sufferer goes, the pestilence is shunned; touch is pollution.

Bond of society! rather say, torch of discord! If there *was* a hell; if there existed infernal demons, empowered to curse mankind, what great-

er evils could the leader of fire and brimstone brigands inflict on mortals than the furious and desolating tempests of human passions, which religion has called up from their slumbers; and in what shapes could his Satanic majesty and his legions more fatally and effectually pour upon the human race the floods of torment and wretchedness, than masked as religious enthusiasts, persuading poor, credulous, confiding human nature that the creator of the universe appeared in a dream; revealed creation, heaven, hell, bidding them propagate the good tidings of the gospel to every land, denouncing infidels as enemies to God, and thus enlisting against a sincere inquirer every rancorous feeling of mortality.

Ah! cries a believer in theology, these evils are caused by the abuse of religion, and not its use. Granted. But ought we to uphold a system of government capable of such abuses? Must the disadvantages of a system be endured, because it has some advantages? Has religion produced more benefit to man than it has produced evil? It is evidently a false guide, for it offered to conduct man through "paths of peace;" it has led them to the battle field. When the safety of mutual affection was looked for, then came the poisoned arrows of savage hostility. Theology is not adapted to the nature of man; it is inconsistent with his happiness. However good may be its principles, it has unfortunately failed in its pretended advantages. While the practice of religion has been pleasing and thought useful in the hands of the enlightened, and stimulated benevolence, has it made bad men better? Has it ever extracted from the fiery temperament those physical excitements which mistakenly and zealously, for the love of God, destroys God's supposed enemies with fire and faggot, rack and gibbet, sword and cannon?

The supposed approbation and command of a deity has added fuel to the flame of constitutional enthusiasm, and turned a man into a wolf. Under the banners of the cross and crescent have men fought, urged onward by the morbid sensibilities engendered in the abuse of the bond of society. Despots have used the name of religion to bind millions of human beings to the foul and bloody chariot wheels of despotism. If religion is so much abused, is it not a system unadapted to human nature? We do not live upon religion; we do not eat, drink, wear, or are we sheltered by, religion. Our laws maintain order, and our mutual wants bind us to each other, and the only use it can be put to is to keep better order.

Since it has failed in its only object, why uphold it? If we only abuse it, instead of using it, then are we unfit to have it among us; we are either too good or too bad, to have such a heavenly or hellish gift. It is like a keen edged sword in the hands of little children; if they abused it by cutting themselves, would you let them have it merely because the abuse of it hurt them? or would you take from them the valuable weapon, valuable in proper hands, but dangerous in those of a child?

To be continued.

Progress of Liberal Opinions.—We have received a letter from the Secretary of "The Society of Mutual Instruction in Natural Science" at Cincinnati, the formation of which we some time ago noticed in the *Correspondent*. It appears that this society, which has existed only

one year, was, for some time, in rather a languid state; but, in consequence of the establishment of the "*Western Tiller*," a journal which boldly advocates the cause of truth, the institution is now flourishing, and promises the happiest results. The following extracts from the above letter, while they convey the most gratifying intelligence from the west of the rapid progress of liberal principles in that section of the country, must stimulate every sincere well wisher of human happiness to renewed exertions in the promotion of mental emancipation :

"We deem it time, sir, for the preservation of our free institutions from the corrupting influence of a crafty and ambitious priesthood, to have a union of action, and an interchange of information; that we may be enabled more effectually to counteract that intriguing spirit, which seeks a domination over society, by infusing into the weak and tender minds of women and children the *fear* of a chimerical hell, or the *love* of an equally chimerical supernatural agent.

"With seminaries of learning, bible, tract, missionary, and mite societies established in almost every part of our vast country; and with a disposition often shown to interfere to a reprehensible extent in the party politics of the times, may we not reasonably fear, that at no very distant day an effort will be made by the priesthood to gain that dominancy by some bold, open, yet specious policy, that they have not been able to attain by the attempt to browbeat their fellow men into obedience to their haughty and overbearing will.

"But I had almost forgot, sir, that I am to inform you of liberal prospects here. Our society was founded on the 14th of January, 1827. Fourteen persons only signed the constitution. We for a long time labored under all those disadvantages incident to new institutions, where a paucity of members is apparent, and the object, to oppose the long established opinions of society, notorious. With too little time to fulfil the duties we had imposed upon ourselves, and without a press to assist in spreading or defending our opinions, we had almost despaired of success; when Mr. Gazlay came out in the *Tiller* with a liberality of sentiment that would have destroyed his paper, but for the timely assistance that was given, because of the persecution. Since then our number has increased to forty one, and we have generally from forty to fifty visitors at our lectures. These circumstances have renewed our hopes, and may, if we can only sustain the paper for a year, give such a direction to popular opinion as will lead the prieststridden portion of community; to follow the paths of natural knowledge, to drink at Nature's fountain, the only one at which may do so 'deeply' and not be intoxicated with the exuberant aberrations of a disordered mind."

Western Tiller.—The receipt of a few numbers of this paper enables us to say, that it is every way deserving of the character given it in the above communication. In the wide range which it takes—embracing politics, science, literature, moral philosophy, poetry, and miscellaneous articles, the editor uniformly displays the most liberal sentiments, expressed in a tone of moderation, though with suitable dignity, which bespeak a well cultivated and enlightened mind. The subjoined article on "Reformation" in a quarter where most men think it is absolutely neces-

sary, we have selected as a specimen of the editor's talents for theological discussion.

Reformation.—Suppose for the sake of the argument, or for the good of the human family, that all the priests and desperate fanatics were sent to Botany Bay; or, what would be still better, to the plough tail or work shops—what would be the consequence? would the world come to an end? would virtue and piety decline? No! none of this would happen. What would happen? wealthy hypocrites, for the want of a sanctuary at which to protect their vices, would be exposed nakedly to the world, and either be put to shame or on their own good conduct: the weak and superstitious would be permitted to enjoy themselves as often as three or four times a week with a pleasant countenance; a little innocent amusement; pleasant friends; and would not feel that they were thereby sure of going to hell. Many of the partition walls now set up to divide friends, neighbors, and citizens, would be levelled: good people could come together like brothers of one family, without being pulled by the skirt or sleeve, with a shrug of the shoulder, and a monstrous long face, accompanied by a sanctimonious exclamation—"Oh la! ar'n't you afraid of being contaminated by such vile company? that there fellow's a Jew; that yonder is a Mahometan, a Turk; this little imp of the devil is a Calvinist; that greasy beggar is a catholic; that down looking whelp is a methodist; can any pious person who expects to save his soul keep company with such wretches?" All this I say would be done away with; and people could come together in some shape or manner, as if they were all made by one God, for one world, and one common tomb. Heaven knows what a bastard, mongrel set we now represent, without common father, mother, or destiny. Another consequence would be, that people learn to mind their own businesses; put the best foot forward, and say grace over their own meat—not steal it and then say grace over it; robbers would be few—for the reason that we should have nobody to encourage and forgive them; every body would be engaged to promote virtue—for this simple reason, that character and success would depend upon it; and there would be no sects to rejoice over others' crimes, as serving to set off and embellish their own dogmas; justice could be administered—because the profession of my faith, my sect, or my church, could not screen the guilty; poor despised merit could come forward clothed in white and shining garments—because there would be no haberdashers to bedizen her in patchwork and caricature; a glorious consequence would be, the immediate emancipation of the press: this great engine of light and freedom would blaze forth in truth and science, and man would stand up in the majesty and glory of mental power: heaven knows what a diminutive, contemptible set of drivellers we now are; not daring to put our noses out of our shells, fearing the priests will bite them off: tyrants would fall—for the simple reason that their chief bulwark would be removed; the devil would lose all patience and quit the earth—for this plain reason, that he would not have a single hypocrite to condemn to the spit, nor a single witness to act as informer; society would present a heavenly appearance, in which confidence, social ease, innocent amusements, and pristine freedom, would entwine with their amaranthine wreaths the gladsome walks of man. Ay, then! then would woman, fair wo-

man, beautiful woman, arise from the grovelling and mournful wretchedness of superstition and bigotry; the oppressive weight of imaginary sin would be shook from her lily bosom; bloody tears would cease to dim the lustre of her shining face, and to disturb her pliant mind; her heart would cease to break, and darkness would no longer cover her buoyant soul—the hellish darkness reflected from barbarous times; the patroness of virtue; the soul of life; the chord and guide of the world's pleasure; the corrector of its errors; the rational soother of its woes; a friend; a companion; the welcome rival in mental combat; loving without superstitious coldness and alloy; cheering without its bitter tears; and smiling upon life, untainted by its corroding fears; she would stand redeemed as the connecting link between men and angels, adored by one, and worthy of the other; as restored to that blissful state from which bigotry alone has decreed her precipitation. Ye weak, ye dark minded, ye gloomy fanatics, see what a paradise earth would be without you; see what a den of wretchedness you made it!"

Mr. Gazley, the editor of the *Western Tiller*, is a gentleman of high standing in Cincinnati, and was formerly representative of that place in congress. We have appointed Mr. G. our agent for the *Correspondent*, and all other publications with which we are concerned. We shall, likewise, be glad to receive and forward subscriptions for the *Tiller*, which is published weekly.

New Harmony Gazette.—The public is informed that we are now sole agent for the New Harmony Gazette, in this city. It published at \$2 per annum, in advance, and contains the most correct information that can be given of the "Social System." The work may be had entire at the office of the *Correspondent*, 15 Chamber street.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Immaculate Conception.—The dispute on the immaculate conception of the Virgin between the Dominicans and Franciscans began as early as the thirteenth century. The contending parties stood at first upon equal ground; but "the merits of faith and devotion" were so decidedly on the side of the Franciscans, that they soon had the Christian mob to support them, and it became dangerous for any divine to assert that the *mother of God* (such is the established language of the church of Rome) had been, like the rest of mankind, involved in original sin. The oracle of the capital allowed, however, the disputants to fight out their battles without showing the least partiality, till public opinion had taken a decided turn.

In 1613, a Dominican, in a sermon preached at the cathedral of Seville, threw out some doubts on the immaculate conception. This was conceived to be an insult not only to the Virgin Mary, but to the community at large; and the populace was kept with difficulty from taking summary vengeance on the offender and his convent. Zuniga, the annalist of Seville, who published his work in 1677, deems it a matter of Chris-

- tian forbearance not to consign the names of the preacher and his convent to the execration of posterity. But if the civil and ecclesiastical authorities exerted themselves for the protection of the offenders, they were also the first to promote a series of expiatory rites, which might avert the anger of the Patroness, and make ample reparation to her insulted honor. Processions innumerable paraded the streets, proclaiming the original purity of the Virgin Mother. The next step was to procure a decision of the pope in favor of the *immaculate conception*. To promote this important object two commissioners were dispatched to Rome, both of them dignified clergymen, who had devoted their lives and fortunes to the cause of the Virgin Mary.

After four years of indescribable anxiety, the long wished for decree, which doomed to silence the opponents of Mary's original innocence, was known to be on the point of passing the *seal of the fisherman*, and the *Se-villians* held themselves in readiness to express their unbounded joy the very moment of its arrival in their town. This great event took place on the 22d of October, 1617, at ten o'clock P. M. "The news, says Zuniga, produced a universal stir in the town. Men left their houses to congratulate one another in the streets. The fraternity of the *Nazarenos*, joining in a procession of more than six hundred persons, with lighted candles in their hands, sallied forth from their church, singing the hymn in honor of *original purity*. Numerous bonfires were lighted, the streets were illuminated from the windows and terraces, and ingenious fireworks were let off in different parts of the town. At midnight the bells of the cathedral broke out into a general chime, which was answered by every parish church and convent; and many persons in masks and fancy dresses having gathered before the archbishop's palace, his grace appeared at the balcony, moved to tears by the devout joy of his flock. At the first peal of the bells all the churches were thrown open, and the hymns and praises offered up in them lent to the stillness of night the most lively sounds of the day."

A day was subsequently fixed when all the authorities were to take a solemn oath in the cathedral, to believe and assert the *immaculate conception*. An endless series of processions followed to thank heaven for the late triumph against the unbelievers. In fact, the people of Seville could not move about, for some time, without forming a religious procession. "Any boy," says a contemporary historian, "who, going upon an errand, chose to strike up the hymn *Todo el Mundo*, was sure to draw after him a train, which from one grew up into a multitude; for there was not a gentleman, clergyman, or friar, who did not join and follow the chorus which he thus happened to meet in the streets."

A few Serious Questions.—Matt. v. 48. If God is a perfect being, could he make man or any other creature imperfect—and if God created man and every other creature perfect, could man, or any other creature, make themselves imperfect?

Rom. viii. 20. Matt. xxv. 41. Mark ix. 43. Would God be just in creating men liable to become imperfect, and then doom them to eternal punishment on account of their imperfection?

Gen. i. 26. To whom did God speak when he said, let us make man in our own image—Did God make man himself, or had he companions to assist him?

Gen. iii. 7. If Adam and Eve sinned in eating fruit, why did they make themselves aprons to cover those parts that were not so directly active in the transgression?

Gen. iv. 17. Who was Cain's wife, and why did he build a city for only his wife, his son, and himself to dwell in?

Gen. ix. 25. Did Noah sin when he cursed his son?

Judges v. 23. Did the angel of the Lord sin, when he said, Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof?

2 Chron. xviii. 22. Why did the Lord put a lying spirit into the mouth of all Ahab's prophesiers?

Judges ix. 23. Why did God send an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem?

Numb. xi. 31, 33. If the Lord gave the Israelites quails to eat, why did he smite them with a great plague whilst the flesh was betwixt their teeth ere it was chewed?

Exod. x. 20. If the Lord hardened Pharaoh's that he should not let the people go, was Pharaoh blameable in not letting them go?

Exod. viii. 17, 18. If all the dust became lice throughout the land of Egypt, why is it said that the magicians could not bring forth lice with their enchantments, seeing there was not any dust left for them to turn into lice?

Exod. xviii. 24. If Moses governed the people by the directions of God, why did he prefer the directions of Jethro his father-in-law?

Deut. xxxiv. 6. If Moses wrote the book called Deuteronomy, how could he say, no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day?

Numb. xxxi. 18. What did Moses mean when he said, but all the women children which have not known a man by lying with him keep alive for yourselves?

Joshua xii. Did Joshua sin by destroying so many kings?

1 Sam. xxv. 24. Was David a man after God's own heart, when he intended to cut off all that pissed against the wall—or when he lay upon his death bed and would not forgive his enemies before he died, but [1 Kings ii. 9.] obliged his son to promise that he would put them to death after his decease; or when he caused Uriah to be set in the fore front of the battle, [2 Sam. xi. 15.] that he might be smitten and die, for the sake of enjoying Bathsheba, Uriah's wife—or when he was killing the Geshurites, [2 Sam. xxvii. 8, 9.] Gezrites, and the Amalekites, and carrying away their cattle and goods, and saved neither man nor woman alive, for fear they should inform against him?

Judges xiv. 19. Why did Samson commit such depredations when the spirit of the Lord came upon him?

Habak. iii. 3. Did Habakkuk the prophet mean God could not be omnipresent when he said God came from Teman, and the holy one from Mount Paran—and did he suppose that God and the holy one were two separate beings, because he says one came from Teman and the other from Mount Paran?

Isaiah vii. 14—viii. 3. When Isaiah said, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, then went unto a prophetess, and she did conceive and bear a son, did he mean Mary the mother of Jesus, which happened seven hundred years after?

Gen. iii. 13. Luke i. 26. If the practice of Satan has been to deceive, might not Mary be deceived though she thought the angel which came to her to have been sent from God, for Satan [2 Corin. xi. 14.] is transformed into an angel of light?

Matt. i. 20. If Joseph knew no more than what he dreamed respecting the father of the child, is that which one man dreams sufficient for another man to rely upon?

Mark vi. 5, 6. If Jesus could not do many mighty works in his own country because of their unbelief, did disbelieving take away his power?

Matt. xviii. 22. When Jesus said to Peter, he must not forgive his enemies till seven times only, but until seventy times seven, did Jesus mean to encourage a man to offend four hundred and ninety times in full assurance of being forgiven?

Mark iii. 15. When Jesus gave his disciples power to cast out devils, was that a miracle, for they met with another man [Luke ix. 49] who could do the same?

Luke xii. 4. John vii. 1. Why did Jesus say to his disciples, fear not them which can kill the body; and after a certain time he would walk no more in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him?

Acts. x. 38. Matt. viii. 32. Mark v. 13. Mark ii. 23. Was Jesus going about doing good, and not destroying people's property, when he bade the devils go into the herd of swine, and about two thousand of the swine perished in the sea? or were his disciples destroying any person's property when they plucked the ears of the standing corn as they went through the corn fields?

John xiii. 26, 27—vi. 70, 71. If Satan only entered into Judas after Jesus had given him a sop, why did Jesus say at a former period, have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil—and if Judas was a devil, why did Jesus choose him to be a disciple?

2 Corin. v. 19. 1 John ii. 2. Matt. vii. 14. If God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them—and that Christ is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, why is it said, narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it?

2 Pet. iii. Luke iii. 23. If all the scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and if holy men of God speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, why did Paul withstand Peter to the face at Antioch? or why did Matthew say Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Christ, and Luke say that Joseph was the son of Heli?

John xx. 31. And if Jesus was the son of God and not the son of Joseph, why was the genealogy traced through Joseph, who could not be his father, except we say Joseph begat Jesus by proxy?

Mark xvi. 16. And if these men, or any of them, were liable to err, why should any person be damned who believe not their doctrine?

Psalm cxxxix. 8. If God is in hell, is God or the devil the supreme governor of hell?

Creeds.—The miseries which have been entailed on the nations of the earth by propagating creeds with the sword, faggot, torture, and imprisonments, are fast dispelling by the genuine spirit of philosophy and free inquiry. The religion of the Jews commenced with Abraham, who it appears had such an horrid idea of the attributes of the Deity as to have been in the act of sacrificing his own and only son to the caprice of his imagination. When the descendants of Abraham had become sufficiently numerous to shake off the yoke of the Egyptians, they commenced their mad and bloody career under the mask of worshipping the only true God, and extirpating all the nations around who differed with them. No sooner had Mahomet attracted a sufficient number of followers, than he commenced a similar career to the descendants of Abraham, and wherever his authority reached he destroyed all those who did not embrace his tenets.

The Christians of Europe feeling strength within themselves, were actuated in their turn by the same spirit, and quitted their own territories in arms, and in immense numbers, to exterminate the followers of Mahomet; so that it is an incontrovertible fact that whenever any sect or party became more powerful than their neighbors, they have invariably taken up arms to destroy the weaker party.

Paine's Birthday.—The Free Press Association intend to celebrate the anniversary of the birthday of THOMAS PAINE, by a public dinner, on the 29th instant, in Boisseux's Dancing Academy, opposite Washington Hall, Broadway. Dinner on the table at 3 o'clock P. M. Tickets \$1 each, to be had at the office of the Correspondent, No. 15 Chamber street, and of the Committee of Arrangements.

Lectures on Science.—The next lecture on science will be delivered in the Hall of the *Free Press Association*, William street, on Sunday, (tomorrow,) the 27th instant, at 11 o'clock forenoon, precisely. The *theological* lectures, as usual, at half past 2 o'clock P. M.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Ecce Homo! or a Critical Inquiry into the History of the Life of Jesus of Nazareth—75 cents in boards.

The People's Rights Reclaimed; being an Exposition of the unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New York compelling the observance of a religious Sabbath—25 cents.

View of the Metaphysical and Physiological Arguments in favor of Materialism—25 cents.

The Scripture Doctrine of Materialism—25 cents.

Paine's Theological Works, complete, 8vo., bound and gilt—\$2; bds. \$1.50.

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 2.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 2, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE BIBLE.

Mr. Editor—If in my first essay I appear little conversant in polemic disputation, you will, I hope, place it to the account of my sex. On these subjects, you know, both custom and habit have seldom permitted us to speak; except, indeed, it be to name the text, or pass unqualified encomiums on the parson's manner, his pious exhortations, or his exceeding *devotional look*. Narrow are the bounds which our forefathers set to the exertion of female powers, and arbitrary the sway which they rigidly enforced. This, perhaps, was all natural enough, and needed not to be assisted by religious admonition. But St. Paul, a crusty old bachelor, if I may guess, with all the frigidity of feeling which a man made up of icicles could be supposed to possess, has added to the severity of our bondage condition; both as it respects body and mind. And it is by the force of no ordinary exertions in civilization, that man has become sensible that his more delicately formed helpmate may safely exercise herself upon other matters, besides nursing the children, attending to the sewing and knitting, playing on the harpsicord or piano, and attending the declination of a few French verbs. I will tell you, sir, when I was married, I could soon perceive that my husband looked upon me as his property, or as a *thing* of mere obedience to his will. Nor was it long before he took upon him the good old practice of reading the Bible in his family. This reading of the Bible, you must know, has had its manifold uses. It has helped many a weak and wavering husband to very grave notions of their importance and authority; and furnished short sentences of sage note, to be used on all occasions, by persons who never possessed two ideas of original growth during their whole lives. But the more my husband read, the less he seemed inclined to converse on scripture; until at the end of about a year and a half he came out like an explosion, blowing up Moses, Samuel, and the rest of the scripture worthies altogether. I must confess I was considerably shocked at this event; and had it not been that his conduct about the same time evinced a greater degree of liberality of sentiment towards my sex, I cannot say what would have been the consequence.

In all the time between his commencing the scripture above mentioned, and to the day of his full rejection of it, he had no other book but the Bible. He has since told me, that previous to that time he had always read the Bible, even from his earliest youth upwards, with the most unlimited faith in its truth. But now, he not only began to doubt of its verity, but of its morality, too, which ended as I have before said,

in a complete explosion of the whole system. It was not long before my pious mother, who had often sat under the preaching of the celebrated parson Edwards, became acquainted with the fact of her having an *infidel* son in law. It grieved her much; but what was to be done: she could only lament an evil that was likely, as she said, to carry with it circumstances dangerous to the future peace and happiness of her child. With all the tenderness, therefore, which could belong to maternal affection, she *fearfully* inquired what *effects* I had perceived from the *new opinion* of my husband. And when I frankly observed to her that I considered him a better man, she faintly answered, that she *hoped* it was true; but I could perceive her mind was not easy.

Since the period of his first rejection of the authority of the scriptures, my husband has never hesitated to express his opinion on that as fearlessly as on any other subject; and to converse upon it in his family with the same freedom—believing it to be in some measure criminal to hold an opinion of which he might appear to be either ashamed, or of which he might be thought to be in doubt.

With this preface, you will not certainly be surprised at my appearing now the decided opposer of a system of religion, which consigns my sex to the mere drudgery, or which permits us to indulge only in the mere frivolities of human existence; and, however weak the first essays, it will surely be thought no inglorious endeavor to convince the world that we can reason.

I have understood, sir, that in Albany there is published a paper called the *Antidote*. By which, and from what I have otherwise seen, I conclude those who were at the christening would have it considered a medicine to be administered to those who have already been infected by the poison of the *Correspondent*, or rather as a preventive of the reading, of those who have as yet never seen your wicked paper. But what, in the name of my pious grandmother, (who never read the Bible except with a most religious nasal tone,) what, I say, do these Antidote gentlemen mean by their publication. In their solicitude to defend, it does appear to me, they give the clearest evidence that they doubt the potency of what they wish to have thought the word of God. And does the word of God, then, when left even handed against the reasoning of man, need to be backed with exertions like these?!! I will not insult you nor your readers with an answer: it is too plain to need any. The condition of the men, together with the tottering condition of the system they support, alternately flash upon the mind, and the riddle is solved. For the space of more than three hundred years the shelves of libraries and bookstores have literally groaned with the weight of thousands and tens of thousands of massive volumes, written in explanation of as many thousand *inexplicable* points of our faith, and in defence of quite as many *defenceless* positions to be found in the Bible; and yet these gentlemen are very suspicious that all is *not yet safe*. The truth is, all is not safe. Eloquence may exhaust her choicest figures, and rhetoric lend the best specimens of her art; yet, we repeat it, all is not safe, and they know it. Eternal damnation may be denounced from the pulpit a thousand and a thousand times against the rude hand that may assail the gothic pile; yet, at the first breath of *infidelity*, (as it is called by the defenders of the

faith,) which only agitates the fogs of superstition, you shall see such men as those who conduct the *Antidote* flying with the utmost solicitude to every part of the antique edifice, each one with a *prop* to support what he considers the most rotten and the most likely to fall.

But, dropping all metaphor, this is helping God with a witness, and brings to my mind what actually happened in Troy twenty-four years ago. Parson Coe, then pastor to the presbyterian congregation, preached twenty-six sermons to prove that Christ was, actually, the SON OF GOD; without at the same time adducing a single fact, or eliciting a solitary argument, that had not before been resorted to, to patch up a genealogy which must ever be rejected by reason. And when reason enters her protest again, which she certainly will, in such a manner as to *command attention*, the people will have to *pay* for twenty-six, or perhaps thirty, more sermons, somewhere else, to prove the same thing over again. Depend on it, sir, these gentlemen of the *Antidote*, and those of this sort, mean to be *well paid for their medicine*.

Athens, January 12, 1828.

OCTAVIA.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 3.

Of the Person of Moses.—Was there ever such a person as Moses? There is so much of prodigy in him from his cradle to his death, that he appears to be an imaginary personage, like the magician Merlin. If he had really existed; if he had performed the dreadful miracles attributed to him in Egypt, would it have been possible that no Egyptian author should have spoken of these miracles, and that the Greeks, the lovers of the marvellous, had not recorded a single word respecting him? Flavius Josephus, who, to extol his despicable nation, seeks after the testimony of the Egyptian authors who have spoken of the Jews, has not the face to quote one that makes mention of the prodigies of Moses. Is not this universal silence a proof that Moses is only a fabulous personage?

Those who have paid any attention to antiquity, know that the ancient Arabs invented many fables, which succeeding ages made known to other nations. They had imagined the history of ancient Bacchus, whom they suppose to have lived long anterior to the time when the Jews tell us their Moses made his appearance. This Bacchus, or Back, who was born in Arabia, had written his laws on two tables of stone; he was called Misem, a name which has some resemblance to that of Moses; he was picked up in a box on the waters, and the signification of his name is, "saved from the waters;" he had a rod with which he performed miracles, and he could change his rod into a serpent at his own pleasure. This same Misem passed the Red Sea dry shod at the head of his army; he divided the waters of Orontes and Hydaspus, and suspended them to the right and left, and a fiery column lighted his army during the night. The ancient Orphic verses, which were sung in the orgies of Bacchus, celebrated a part of these extravagancies. This fable was so ancient, that the fathers of the church believed Misem or Bacchus to have been Noah. We must observe that Bacchus was known in Egypt, Syria, Asia

Minor, and Greece, a long while before any nation had heard the name of Moses, or even of Noah and the whole of his genealogy. Every thing that belonged exclusively to the Jewish writings was absolutely unknown to both eastern and western nations, from the name of Adam to that of David. The wretched Jews had their own chronology and fables apart, which bore only a slight resemblance to those of other nations. Their writers, who were very tardy in commencing their labors, ransacked every thing they could find among their neighbors, and disguised their thefts very badly. Witness the fable of Moses, borrowed from that of Bacchus; their ridiculous Samson from that of Hercules; Jephtha's daughter from Iphigenia; Lot's wife imitated from Eurydice, &c. Is it not highly probable that the Jews adopted this fable, and that it was written as soon as they had obtained some knowledge of literature under their kings? They must have a little of the marvellous as well as other people, but they were not the inventors. Never was there a petty nation more stupid; all their falsehoods were plagiarisms; and all their ceremonies were visibly performed in imitation of those of the Phœnicians, Assyrians, and Egyptians.

What they themselves have added appear to be such disgusting stupidities and absurdities, that they excite our indignation and pity. In what ridiculous romance could we bear to hear of a man changing all the waters into blood by a flourish of his rod, in the name of a god unknown, while the magicians can do the same thing in the name of their local deities? The only superiority that Moses obtains over the king's magicians is, in creating lice, which they were unable to perform. This made a great prince say, that as far as lice were concerned, the Jews could do more than all the magicians in the world.

How did an angel of the Lord come and kill all the cattle in Egypt? How did it happen that the king of Egypt had afterwards an army of cavalry? And how did the cavalry proceed to cross the muddy bottom of the Red Sea? How did the same angel of the Lord slay all the first born of the Egyptians in a single night? It was then that the pretended Moses ought to have taken possession of this beautiful country, instead of running away, like a coward and a vagabond, with two or three millions of men, among whom it is said that there were six hundred and thirty thousand combatants. It was this prodigious multitude that he took with him to wander and die in the wilderness, where they could not even find water to drink. To facilitate this grand expedition, his god divides the waters of the sea, which he raises like two mountains to the right and left, in order that his favorite people may perish with hunger and thirst.

All the rest of the history of Moses is equally absurd and barbarous. His quails; his manna; his conversations with God; twenty-three thousand of the people killed by order of the priest; twenty-four thousand massacred at another time; and six hundred and thirty thousand combatants in a wilderness where they could never find two thousand men! Assuredly the whole of this appears to be the height of extravagance; and it has been said, that Orlando Furioso and Don Quixote are geometrical books in comparison with those of the Hebrews. If we could find only a few rational and honest actions in the fable of Moses, we might then in reality believe that such a person had existed.

They have the face to tell us, that the feast of the Passover among the Jews is a proof of the passage of the Red Sea. At this feast they thanked the Jewish god for his goodness in killing all the first born of Egypt; and they tell us, that nothing could be more true than this holy and divine butchery. "Can we conceive," says that declaimer and trifling reasoner, Abbadie, "that it was possible for Moses to institute sensible memorials of an event, recognized to be false by more than six hundred thousand witnesses?" Poor man! thou shouldst have said by more than two millions of witnesses, for six hundred and thirty thousand combatants, whether they were fugitives or not, assuredly lead us to suppose that there were more than two millions of inhabitants. Thou sayest, then, that Moses read his Pentateuch to two or three millions of Jews. Thou believest, likewise, that these two or three millions would have written against Moses if they had discovered any errors in his Pentateuch, and that they would have had their remarks inserted in the journals of the country. Thou hast forgot nothing, except telling us that these three millions have signed as witnesses, and that thou hast seen their signature.

Thou believest, then, that the temples and rites instituted in honor of Bacchus, Hercules, and Persius, evidently prove that Persius, Hercules, and Bacchus were the sons of Jupiter; and that among the Romans, the temple of Castor and Pollux was a demonstration that Castor and Pollux had fought for the Romans. Thus they always beg the question; and, in matters of the greatest importance to the human race, these controversial traffickers make use of arguments that lady Blackacre durst not hazard on the stage.

We see that these tales have been written by fools, commented upon by simpletons, taught by knaves, and given to children to be learned by heart; yet the sage is called a blasphemer because he becomes indignant, and is irritated at the most abominable fooleries that ever disgraced human nature.

The inspiration attributed to the Jewish Books.—How can we suppose that God would choose a horde of Arabs to be his favorite people, and that he would arm this horde against all other nations? And why, when fighting at the head of them, did he so frequently suffer his people to be vanquished and to become slaves? In giving them laws, why did he forget to inculcate among this little troop of thieves the belief of the immortality of the soul, and the rewards and punishments after death, while all the great neighboring nations, such as the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Assyrians, and Phœnicians, had so long embraced this salutary belief? Is it possible that God should explain to the Jews the manner of going to the privy in the wilderness, and hide from them the dogma of a future life?

Herodotus tells us, that the famous temple of Tyre was built two thousand three hundred years before his time; and they say, that Moses conducted his troop in the desert, about sixteen hundred years before our æra. Herodotus wrote five hundred years before the vulgar æra, so that the temple of the Phœnicians subsisted twelve hundred years before Moses, and the Phœnician religion was established long before that time. This religion, as well as that of the Chaldeans and Egyptians, announced the immortality of the soul, which was never a fundamental dogma with

the Jews. We are told that they were a rude people, and that God put himself upon a level with them. With whom? Jewish robbers! God more stupid than his people! Is not this blasphemy?

Who is the Author of the Pentateuch?—I am asked, who is the author of the Pentateuch? I would as soon be asked who wrote the Four Sons of Aimon, Robert the Devil, and the history of Merlin the magician. Sir Isaac Newton, who so far degraded himself as to examine this question seriously, pretends that Samuel wrote these reveries, apparently to render the name of king odious to the Jewish horde, whom this detestable priest wished to govern by himself. I am of opinion myself, that the Jews could neither read nor write, till the time of their captivity under the Chaldeans, because their letters were first Chaldaic, and afterwards Syriac. We have never had an alphabet purely Hebraic.

I fancy that Esdras forged all these tales of a tub after the captivity. He wrote them in Chaldean characters in the jargon of the country, in the same way as the peasantry of the North of Ireland make use of the English alphabet. The Cuteans who inhabited Samaria wrote the same Pentateuch in Phœnician characters, which they made use of in that country, and this Pentateuch is still extant.

I believe Jeremiah might contribute a good deal to the composition of this romance. We know that he had a strong attachment to the Babylonish kings; it is evident from his rhapsodies that he was paid by the Babylonians, and that he betrayed his own country; he wishes every thing to yield to the king of Babylon. The Egyptians were at that time enemies of the Babylonians, and it was to make his court to the great king who was master of Harshalaim Kedusha, called by us Jerusalem, which made Jeremiah and Esdras conspire to instil into the Jews such a horror for the Egyptians. They took care to say nothing about the people of the Euphrates. They are slaves that keep upon good terms with their masters. They confess, indeed, that the Jewish horde has almost always been enslaved, but they respect those to whom they were then in subjection.

Whether or not any other Jews have written the feats and tricks of their kings, is a matter as unimportant to me as the History of the Knights of the Round Table, and the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne; and I fancy the most useless of all researches must that be of finding out the name of the author of a ridiculous book. Who first wrote the histories of Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto? I do not know, nor do I care about knowing it.

To be continued.

THE NEW YORK OBSERVER.

Mr. Editor—"Precious fruits of deism!" exclaims the *New York Observer*, in charging a deist without any name with the crime of beating his child for refusing to go and hear a deistical discourse on the Sabbath day. But, as they have not given any names of the parties, it is highly probable that this is nothing more than another pious fabrication, like every thing belonging to the "tract" system. However, should the fact be better substantiated hereafter, it will then only prove that the said

deist is more of a Christian than a deist; for it is the general practice of Christian parents to beat their children for not going willingly to their stated meetings on the same day! Indeed, so universally is beating inculcated and practised by all Christians, that it is believed that the bigots of the "Observer" cannot find one father of a family out of fifty who has not repeatedly been guilty of the very crime with which they have charged a pretended deist.

A THEIST.

ANOTHER PIOUS FORGERY.

Mr. Editor—Pious forgeries have so long been practised with profit and impunity, by the priests of every nation, and particularly by those of the Christians, even to this day, that it is not prudent to give credit to any thing that proceeds from their interested pens and presses, unless it is accompanied with all the usual circumstantial evidence which attends the cause of truth.

There is every cause for suspecting, that nine tenths of all their pious trash, called "tracts," are nothing more than arrant forgeries, if we only look at the intangible form in which they are ushered into the world; for how few and solitary are the cases where these fables give us the names of the priests who make these great conversions, the names of the parties converted, the township where they reside, or the dates of these remarkable events! All blank, blank, blank!—and why! Because a detail of all these important items, as necessary to establish their truth, would enable doubters to investigate them too closely, and thus deprive these pious forgeries of all their efficacy in deluding the ignorant.

These reflections have been drawn from the perusal of another priestly trick, called the "Legacy," lately published in the "Orange Patriot" of your state, for the purpose of fleecing the ignorant out of some more such legacies, for the same purpose of delusion. Not a *name* of either the priest or sinner, or the residence of either, or a date, is to be found in that lengthy—"pious forgery," no doubt.

C. SCHULTZ.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1828.

PAINE'S BIRTHDAY.

On Tuesday last, the anniversary of the birthday of Thomas Paine was celebrated at the Academy, corner of Reed street and Broadway, by the New York Free Press Association; on which occasion upwards of 70 gentlemen sat down to a public dinner. After the cloth was removed, a number of ladies entered the orchestra, when the Chairman (Mr. Offen) delivered the following

ADDRESS:

Ladies and Gentlemen—This day, which has been considered by fanatics the birthday of a *monster* rather than of a man, is now remembered and observed by thousands, both in England and America, who a few years ago would have been struck with horror at the bare mention of the name of THOMAS PAINE. As nothing that I can advance at this time will add to the merits of a so well known and truly exalted character as

the author of "Common Sense," "Rights of Man," and "Age of Reason," I shall, as an introduction to the arrangements of the day, call your attention to the progress of liberal principles. Notwithstanding the efforts that have been made in different ages by such men as *Mirabaud*, *Voltaire*, *Hume*, and others to free the human race from the bondage of ignorance and fanaticism, their individual exertions could effect but little so long as church and state were united. When the revolution of America had dissolved this wicked and destructive alliance, then, and not till then, could *reason* attack, with any hope of success, the accumulated fraud and falsehood of fifteen hundred years.

Let it never be forgotten, ladies and gentlemen, that it was the revolution of America which gave new life and vigor to the hopeless, despairing cause of insulted, persecuted, and priestridden man. It was then that the energies and wisdom of a host of philosophers, legislators, and heroes first appeared in aid of the human race. Then it was that free and liberal opinions received an impulse before unknown, and were directed and supported by the zeal, wisdom, and patriotism of the immortal PAINE. It was the experience he gained in that ardent struggle for liberty, and the desire to give his country the benefit of his labors, which induced him to visit England and publish his *Rights of Man*. The effect this had in shaking the rotten system of that country will be long remembered, as the author of the *Rights of Man* was burnt in effigy in every city, town, and village in England—the only answer that could be given by a government which professes to be the admiration of the world!

During the war of England against France, every measure of caution and cruelty was resorted to by the British government to stop the progress of liberal opinions. The *habeas corpus* act was suspended: men were dragged to prison without knowing for what: the honest man had no security; the innocent, no appeal.

In the year 1817, the works of Thomas Paine, even his political works, were so far suppressed, that only one or two particular booksellers would sell them, and that at an enormous price, and to persons only in whom they could confide. Five dollars have been given in London for the *Age of Reason* alone, which is now selling in this city for 37 1-2 cents! At this moment all the writings of Paine are sold openly in London by Mr. Richard Carlile and others; and his theological works form the best selling standard books of the day.

In 1818, the birthday of Mr. Paine was celebrated at an obscure tavern in London, by a few friends who could confide in each other. At this time the *habeas corpus* act was suspended. In 1826, eight years after, the birthday of Mr. Paine was celebrated, in the most public manner, at the City of London Tavern, the first tavern of the metropolis. The same year, it was celebrated in a number of other places, both in England and Scotland, by the friends of liberal principles.

In 1825, a few friends in this city celebrated for the first time the birthday of Mr. Paine. Mr. Young, of Harmony Hall, was the only person who had the courage and liberality to provide a dinner on that occasion. Now, we have choice of situations; and the day will be celebrated in different parts of this city, both in public and private.

I have, ladies and gentlemen, given you a short account of the steady march of liberal opinions. I know it will increase your pleasure when you recollect that this day will be one of rejoicing, harmony, and friendship with thousands in England, Scotland, and in different parts of this vast republic.

Before concluding, permit me to say, that twelve months ago, this day, the "New York Free Press Association" took its rise, for the avowed purpose of supporting a paper, then in existence, which advocated the cause of mental freedom. The principles and labors of this Association are before the public; and I sincerely hope and wish that the friendship of the associates may be as firm and durable as I believe their efforts will be beneficial to the human race.

The Chairman then gave the following toast, which was drank in silence:

THOMAS PAINE—We meet to respect his memory, and extend his principles.

To be continued.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

ON THE ASSERTION, THAT "RELIGION IS THE BOND OF SOCIETY."

By H. A. Fay.

Continued from page 9.

In travelling around our planet, we find on its surface many nations with different customs; but the individuals are all human, with human passions. They love, hate, fight, and make peace. Whether possessing religion or not, they are in communities and tribes. There is as much real refinement of heart among the most savage people as adorns the most civilized. Wars, domestic and foreign, are as sanguinary among the luxurious citizens of a Paris, a London, and a New York, as they are between the naked tenants of caves, tents, and wigwams. In a tribe of North American Indians, the public opinion is their government and laws. A murderer becomes the victim of public indignation, and dies. All the social virtues flourish, without the aid of books. Science had dawned and made rapid strides among a people, and at a time when Jesus Christ is admitted not to have been in existence. This science struggled under a religion which opposed its progress. The benumbing effects of all religions have been the great obstacle to free inquiry; and if religion is called the bond of arts and sciences, it must mean their chains; and, instead of bond, say—bondage.

If religion is a principle which merits support, why should its discussion be a dangerous thing? Rather let it be the constant theme of every writer; let a column in every newspaper be daily devoted to it; let dissertations issue from every book store; be it the swelling harmony of eloquence from the bench, the pulpit, the bar, the rostrum, the senate house. May its sublime objects cheer the domestic fire side circle, and be its enlivening hopes mingled with science, business, and amusement. How is it now? Wherever heaven or paradise is talked of, or rather hinted at, by a young person, and dogmatically declared by an old de-

votes, universal gloom pervades the presence; the laughing ebullitions of the healthy and happy reveller in pure, natural, unsophisticated, and moderate pleasures is frowned into solemnity; the speaking eyes become lustreless, the cheek blanched with fear, or reddened by the awakened and smothered volcano of indignant feelings in the bosom of the philosophic lover of openness, truth, and hilarity.

Why should religion be such a bond in society?—stalking about among our sports, like a demon of darkness; breathing around it a chilling atmosphere, and binding in icy fetters the pure, limpid streams of honest enjoyment; like surly winter, withering at its approach the bloom of the rose, annihilating the perfumes of the grove, hushing the song of the feathered harmonists of the air, and making the pebbled brook, which frolicked and gurgled in lively gambols and soothing tones beneath the smiling summer zephyrs, one cold, unmoving, silent bed of ice.

It is urged that religious awe is a necessary restraint on licentious tendencies; that mirth would become ribaldry, and sport change to outrageous riot, but for the wholesome solemnities with which religion is clothed. When I examine the conduct of assemblies, I perceive that in courts of justice there is order, decorum, and attention. This is the influence of law, truth, and public opinion. In our family circles and social meetings proper deportment is observed, through the very love of rational enjoyment which pervades all hearts. In this place, where the doctrine is so boldly advocated, that virtue is connected with happiness, vice with misery, and that it is proper to investigate the merits of every book, especially the Bible, about which so much has been said and written; in this place, I say, where we meet, unawed by the frowns or threats of priests, kings, and aristocrats, to ask each other what shall we do today and tomorrow to make ourselves better and wiser, and happier—here there is no disorder, except the occasional muttering of a willing slave of superstitious folly.

There is enough to make us sad in this world, without conjuring up to our morbid imaginations the picture of a perpetually burning lake of fire and brimstone, where we shall be for ever tossed to and fro, by hideous demons, unless we can yield assent to unintelligible dogmas, which bid reason be still—reason, which always will speak, though it is from the deepest recesses of the mind, dungeoned there by those cunning hypocrites who revel securely amid the superstitious fears and unnatural phantoms which the knowledge of human nature has enabled them to conjure up from the ocean depths of ignorance.

My mind has, from infancy, been devoted to the discovery of new methods of making myself smile, and making my fellow creatures smile. What does man want to make him more serious than the conscious certainty of death, disease, despondency, pain, disappointment, and “the thousand ills that flesh is heir to?” What dreadful evils, I ask, are there more than these, that can result from looking at the brightest and most sunshiny fields in the landscape of Nature?

I think gloom is unnecessary; it is one of the wheels in the mechanism of despotism and priestcraft; it is a portion of that pestilence which they have spread through society. No foul, infectious plague ever made

so much devastation as superstition. Its invisible deleteriousness pervades every particle of our moral atmosphere; while these men! shall I call them men, who, the accursed keepers of this "Pandora's box," with the whites of their eyes turned towards the clouds, their honied voices mocking truth and honesty with hypocritical prayers, cry Allah! Alla! Mahomet is the prophet of God! or, in Jesus alone is there hope!

Our priests do not, at the present day, literally roast us at the stake, or chop us into little bits, as priests have formerly done when the people would be fools enough to let them. But they do what is as bad. Public credulity is their throne and altar; their titles are "the reverend," "right reverend," "very reverend," though some of them are yet scarcely bearded; and there have been some "very right reverends" the veriest scoundrels in the world, and may be now for all I know. Their weapons of cruelty are their prayers and their tender mercies. They do not, however, chop us to pieces; but when they pray to their gods to forgive us for our sins, they give in that way the signal to the deluded multitude for persecution.

Nothing is done, or seen: there is no scaffold; no gibbet; no rack—Forgive me, reason, truth, and charity, for uttering such a falsehood!—There are racks, gibbets, and scaffolds. They are erected at the corner of every street; in every public hall, and by every hearthstone, which ought to be sacred to domestic felicity. The reputation and finest feelings of the advocate of free inquiry are torn by the pincers of scornful holiness. He is gently told by one friend, "you had better be still." Another avoids him in the street, fearful of being thought an associate of irreligion. One says "it is not respectable." Ah! dreadful ecclesiastical inquisition, where friendship is doomed to officiate as executioner! If other men can bow their meek heads to this martyrdom, let me say, it is not "a bed of roses" to me.

But I think I could withdraw my mind within the secured fortress of conscious manly integrity, and laugh to scorn their engines of vengeance. I would rather be the opposer than supporter of falsehood. I would rather be frowned upon by the clouded brow of (each) every proud priest in Christendom, and, wrapping myself up in the protecting mantle of independent feeling, await the storm of his excommunicating wrath, than be the despicable adulator of his office, to lend my feeble aid in the preservation of his power, and ignobly, for fear of the ridicule of vulgar ignorance and cunning hypocrisy, forge mental fetters for my abject self and unfortunate fellow creatures: no! not even for all the luxury, and dull, insipid heartlessness, which the willing worshippers of these divines vegetate and sicken upon. Before I would submit to shame the form of man, by being the mere monkey, the ape of folly; throwing aside my reason, and exercising its functions only as the fitful breeze of fashion blew—shaping my course through life by other people's opinions—literally making every giddy fool a tyrant over myself—sacrificing my freedom of thought, and heartfelt comforts, which my nature makes congenial to me and which are harmless to others; I say, before I would submit to such degradation, to me the wretchedest slavery, I would fly to the western forests; contest my morsel of food with the bloody wolf; and

throw my fate upon the protection of the uncultivated wilds and the rocky caverns of savage nature.

But why should free born Americans permit superstition to be the bond of their shame and sufferings? Did not our ancestors leave their homes in Europe; cross 300 miles of a trackless, stormy ocean; rush desperately up the rocky shores of a new continent; drag their bloody and wounded limbs amid howling panthers and fierce Indians, and die of famine; some also by the tomahawk, by pestilence, and other hardships—for what?—to nourish with their blood the soil destined to be free from religious persecution! Their descendants, afterwards, bled before the artillery of corrupted Europe for the same inestimable blessings, and the regal sceptre of priestcraft was broken. Why do you fear? Are the fragments of that sceptre gathered up and again wielded in the chair of state? No! The secular power of the church is extinct. Why, then, do you shrink, tremble, and are silent? You shame your ancestors; they scorned to fear the thunder and lightning of ecclesiastical tyranny! they extinguished the lightning—hushed the thunders—and brought to ignominious execution the political “Jove” of theology. You, who are slaves of superstition, unworthy generation, you prostrate your recreant forms before the mere shadow; are scared at the pale, shapeless, undefined ghost, sitting in the moonshine of your distempered fancies, of that power which your fathers destroyed! Religion is the bond of society, and ye are its bondsmen.

“The true fear of God in the heart” is not the bond of the society called “The Free Press Association.” They do not profess to live in *fear*, but in pleased admiration of, and calm resignation to, the controlling principles of Nature. Their bond is the love of knowledge; and it has hitherto been found sufficient to keep them united.

It has been said that the ceremonies of religious worship are now so closely interwoven with the fibres of civilized society, that their preservation is necessary; that all ties will be unloosed if forms of religion are lost, and that now we must make the best of them; that sacred days, as Sunday, Christmas, and others, are become holidays; and that if the people were unoccupied with religious devotions, they would spend those days in mere indolence or mischief. It is also asserted that oaths, and appeals to God, are essential to the administration of justice, and that all good members of society should endeavor to heighten the solemnity of the obligations and forms, instead of diminishing it.

But, should free discussion be allowed as to religion, morality, and science in these very pulpits, whence only emanate the dogmas of a particular faith, the audiences would be as great as at present. We have found free inquiry to attract as many persons as any sermon could. As to oaths in courts of justice, they are not the real avenues to truth. A false statement, in the course of a legal trial, is punishable by imprisonment in the state prison, and the equivocater is almost always detected in cross examination. The quakers merely affirm; and since the establishment of this institution, the evidence of its members, without an oath, has been frequently admitted in court; and it is now made a rule in the judicial tribunals of the great city of New York, that the most sa-

cred asseveration of a believer in a religious system is of no more value than the affirmation of a member of "The Free Press Association."

In educating children, it has been customary to teach them that a rich man cannot easily get to heaven; that he enjoys himself in this world, and is punished in the next; but that the virtuous are martyrs here and saints hereafter. Is this calculated to *bind* the mind to virtue? The first idea that occurs to a youth on perceiving the uncertainty of divine revelations is, that if he is vicious here, he may enjoy himself, and laugh at the threatened hell. He will, and we find he generally does, launch into the sea of dissipation, until the physical pangs, which rend his diseased body, tell him that vice is *not* pleasure.

Would it not more effectually *bind* a youth to proper habits, if he was taught in infancy the great truth that true enjoyment and honesty are inseparably connected? Let the practical demonstrations of the doctrine be pointed out to him whenever his childish follies lead him to indulge in gluttony, indolence, and peevishness, and the scorn he incurs by ill treatment of others. On the other hand, let him be reminded of the pleasure he receives from honest industry. He will then become a moral philosopher by habit. His affections, entwined with those virtues which nourish happiness, bound to morality by the most powerful tie, his own interest, he will enter upon the duties of manhood, a dignified and useful citizen, a *real* freeman. It may be replied, that the world is full of deceit; that "honesty is but a ragged virtue." The deceit I acknowledge exists, but as to the rags, I think that substantial comfort and integrity may go hand in hand. To the effeminate and luxurious, I cannot promise a continuation of uninterrupted intemperate sensuality, as consistent with sincerity. But if they wish to pass through life in a feverish delirium of degrading and sickly indulgence, let them drag on their hours of insincerity, hypocrisy, and slavish assent to every folly which circumstances have given birth to in the world of fashion. These individuals cannot expect to be free from the *bands* of fear and credulity.

To the healthy mind, and the cheerful partaker of simple, natural pleasures, whose thoughts are free as the wind, and whose habits are uncontaminated by the influence of superstition, there is more hope. Life is full of promises to them. Let them constantly pursue a rational gratification, consistent with and congenial to their desires, and they will find that the path of truth is perfumed by the most delicious flowers, and that there is a perpetual variety in the journey of life to the free and close observer of natural operations. He will see with a sharpened vision—a vision cleared from mists of fear and faith—he will behold the short sighted and the foolish running eagerly to catch the fleeting meteors of opulence, power, and glory—he will behold them heedlessly stumble into the quagmires of vexation, disappointment, and despair. Every step he takes shall be on firm ground, and he will enjoy the utmost share of human felicity that falls to the lot of mortality. A future state must be left to the arrangement of that power which has hitherto confined human knowledge to matter; for there is no greater reward to those who are under the bond of fear and faith. The *slavish* thinker is, in this respect, neither better nor worse than the *free* thinker.

Progress of Liberal Opinions.—In our last, we gave some gratifying particulars respecting the progress of "the Cincinnati Society for Mutual Instruction in Natural Science," and the establishment of a journal in the capital of Ohio for the purpose of diffusing liberal principles. We have now to state, that another Association has been organized in Philadelphia, under the name of the "Society of Liberal Friends," having in view objects similar to those contemplated by the New York and Cincinnati Associations. An esteemed correspondent at Philadelphia writes as follows, under date the 20th January, respecting the proceedings of the society there:

Mr. George Houston—

Sir—This afternoon I attended a lecture on education, delivered before the "Society of Liberal Friends," (recently established,) by Mr. Coleman, a well informed, zealous advocate of liberal principles. Mr. Coleman delivers lectures every Sunday afternoon on theological and moral subjects; and, from his natural talents, extensive information, and prepossessing appearance, cannot, I think, fail to produce much good. I am truly astonished that he should attract so large a congregation in this city of bigotry and proscription. May success attend his efforts.

MISCELLANEOUS.

PREACHING TO THE CHINESE.

(From Voltaire.)

Jesuit. I tell you, my brethren, our Lord is willing to make every man a chosen vessel; it only depends upon yourselves, by believing my doctrines. You are perfect masters of your own minds, of your hearts, thoughts, and sentiments. Jesus Christ died for all, and free grace is offered to every one.

Jansenist. The truth is not in you, you child of wrath and perdition. You are only preaching up errors and falsehoods. Jesus Christ died only for a few, to whom grace is given. Your prayers are blasphemous; for St. Augustine and St. Paul—

Jesuit. Hold thy tongue, vile heretic: get out, thou enemy of St. Peter. My brethren, do not listen to this innovator, who quotes Augustine and Paul; but come to me and I will baptise you.

Jansenist. Take care, my brethren; if you suffer yourselves to be baptised by a Molinist, you will be damned to all eternity. I will baptise you in a few months after I have taught you the nature of grace.

Quaker. Ah! my brethren, be not baptised, neither by the paw of that wolf, nor the claw of the tiger. Believe me, it is better not to be baptised at all, as our custom is. Baptism may be good; but it is as well to have nothing to do with it: all that is necessary is, to be inspired with the spirit. You have only to wait, and it will come and teach you more in one moment, than these quacks could in their whole life.

English Parson. Ah! my lambs, what monsters come hither to devour you. My dear flock, know ye not, that the church of England is the only pure church; hath not our chaplains, who came to Canton to drink punch, told you so?

Jesuit. The church of England is a deserter, who hath renounced the pope ; and the pope is infallible.

Lutheran. Your pope is an ass, as Luther pronounces him to be. My dear Chinese, pay no attention to the pope, the church of England, the Molinists, the Jansenists, or Quaker ; but believe only the Lutherans ; if you pronounce but these words, *in, cum, sub*, you may drink what you please.

Puritan. We deplore, my brethren, your blindness, and that of those people ; but thanks be to God, the Eternal has sent me hither at this moment to confound these babblers : listen to my discourse, for you must know, that in the fourth century of the—

Mahometan. By the death of Mahomet ! What vain discourse ! If one of these dogs attempt to bark again, I will cut off his ears. As to their prepuce I would not give myself any trouble about it. It is you, my dear Chinese, that I wish to circumcise. I will give you eight days to prepare yourselves for it ; and after that, if any of you attempt to drink wine, you must ask my permission.

Jew. Ah ! my children, if you wish to be circumcised, give me the preference ; I will permit you to drink as much wine as you please, but if you are so impious as to eat hogs' flesh, you will be roasted by a slow fire.

Heaven.—It has been correctly observed by Bolingbroke and others, that successive races and castes of mankind have formed their gods and their heavens agreeably to their own characters and desires. The American Indians calculate on finding successful chaces after wild animals, verdant plains, and no winter. The more amorous Asiatic thinks about nothing but the enjoyment of the most delightful women as his future lot in immortal life. The African hopes for the accomplishment hereafter of those desires about home, friends, and plenty of food, in which he suffers abstinence here. The European is corrupted with all sorts of wild metaphysical notions, and each forms his heaven and hereafter in his own way, and after his own frenzied imagination.

A Particular Interposition of Providence.—The opinion of Dr. Hawkesworth on this topic is said to have cost him his life ; for the clamor excited against him by priests and bigots, on account of a passage in the preface to the first Voyages of Byron and Cook, in which he ventured to deny the doctrine of a particular providence, had an effect upon his health and spirits which he could not surmount.

The Mechanism.—According to the system of necessity, vice is no more in our own power than virtue : we act in both cases under the impressions which certain objects make on our senses, and these senses move our desires, desires operate on the will, and the will produces the action ; the rectitude or depravity of any man's conduct, therefore, depends on the impressions which he receives in his youth ; for these impressions, frequently repeated, become habits, and form the character of the man : hence will be seen the necessity of a virtuous education. Let no man

be alarmed at the idea of his being a mere machine, for at any rate he is not of his own making, and therefore has no more right to claim a liberty of action than the right of making himself; he can do nothing which is not intended by a superior power, and therefore he need not fear being impelled to vice by an irresistible propensity; for if such is the will of providence, it is not in his power to resist, though he may suffer for his imprudence: I will not venture to maintain that whatever is, is right; but I will affirm that it cannot be otherwise than it is.

To interpret.—Among many instances that might be produced of oracles and men pretending to know the will of God, the two which are now cited are, the one the most serious, and the other the most ridiculous: The Carians, when attacked by Harpagus, one of Cyrus's generals, and threatened with the loss of their liberty, determined to defend themselves by cutting a canal across an isthmus, and make their country an island; but finding some difficulty in it from the rocky nature of the ground, they consulted the oracle of Apollo at Delphos, who returned them for answer, "That they must desist, for Jupiter would have made their peninsula an island, if he had chosen it." On the proposal being laid before the council of Castile, they returned for answer, after much deliberation, "That if God had chosen it to be so, he would have made it so; and therefore they begged leave to reject the proposal."

Anima Mundi.—It is somewhat singular, that as the vital spirit of man has been personified under the name of the soul, so the vital principle of the universe has been personified under the name of God; and yet neither can be proved to have any separate existence distinct from matter.

Free Press Association.—The regular monthly meeting of the Association takes place tomorrow, (Sunday, 3d instant,) at half past 10 o'clock forenoon, precisely. Punctual attendance is requested. The theological lectures, as usual, at half past 2 o'clock P. M. The scientific lectures will be continued on Sunday, 10th instant, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 3.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 9, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE CHRISTIANS' HELL.

Mr. Editor—It will not be denied that a future, or, perhaps I may justly term it a continued, state of existence, is a subject of momentous import. If our bodies or any part of our system are destined to enjoy an eternal existence, either felicitous or miserable, we are certainly called upon by every tie which binds us to our interest, to our happiness, to bestow upon it our most serious and weighty consideration: for I fearlessly assert that no human being, enjoying his rational faculties, ever was or ever can be able to look upon an eternity of pain with indifference. An eternity of misery, deprivation of every thing we can conceive as giving value to existence, contains in its view all that is awful and horrible, not only to the mind and perceptions of the human species, but must also be considered in the same light by beings of a still higher or of the very highest order of intelligence. I therefore repeat, it is the indispensable duty of every individual to examine for himself this all important question with the utmost calmness and deliberation, and with an untiring and undivided attention. It is true, the point has been long settled to our hands; but it is the legality, the correctness, of this decision that I wish to see examined by the light of reason and common sense.

Nearly two thousand years ago, a heaven and a hell were called into existence by men whose judgment and veracity would, at this period of time, be held in very dubious estimation; and I consider the pertinacious adherence to dogmas established in such a remote period, passing over their tremendous bearing, as an instance of weakness and credulity, in direct opposition to the boasted march of human intellect. As, however, assertion is not proof, I shall, as well as my limited abilities permit, support the opinion I entertain of this ideal hell being the production of minds the most ignorant and barbarous. First, then, it appears to me, the consideration of its injustice would alone be sufficient for the refusal to believe in such a horrible place of abode. Those who have full confidence in the existence of a supreme intelligent being, must clothe that being with the attribute of unerring justice, as without that quality our ideas of him, sufficiently vague and discordant as they already are, would be still more involved in confusion and perplexity. Unless we attribute to such a power the most just and unspotted purity of action, it is folly to think on, or to believe in, his existence; and we should be lost in our endeavors to meet his supposed views in calling mankind into being. How can we separate in idea the principle of justice, whether dealt out from the hand of a frail and finite being, or from one clothed with im-

mortality and omnipotence? I say, then, can the existence of such a place be defended on the ground of the most impartial, the most inexorable, justice? Has a god, by the creation of the Christians' hell, acted towards us in accordance with our ideas of that virtue, to say nothing of his boasted mercy and ever loving kindness? Prejudice, priestcraft, and ignorance may howl out an affirmative; but truth, reason, and common sense, in harmonious, convincing accents, say—no!

To prove that mankind have never received from a supreme and intelligent power any direct, positive, and indisputably authentic information that he had prepared a hell, a place of torment for the greater part of their number, would involve an inquiry into the pretended authenticity of the two volumes denominated by Christians sacred and holy. The fabulous original of those books, the disgusting and barbarous conduct ascribed therein to an omnipotent being, have been repeatedly shown by men of the greatest talents, of the most acute and discriminating character. The contradictions, the absurdities, which almost every chapter presents, are of themselves sufficient to destroy all claim to their being of divine origin. In support of this assertion, I refer to the books themselves, to the unrefuted pages of a Palmer and a Paine, and a host of others, whose names might be mentioned. It is, therefore, altogether unnecessary to enlarge on this point; the only one at all necessary to consider being—is it just, is there any probability that the author of our existence will plunge any of our number into an abyss of misery, endless in duration? For myself I must say that I look upon the bare proposition, the mere possibility of such a fate being in reserve for us, as an insult to common sense, a gross libel, not on the mercy but on the justice of God. It is worse than folly, it is madness, it is the very acme of stupidity and ignorance, to talk of free agency, of our ability to avoid such a dreadful fate. What does the Christian say is the contemplated object of our creation? It is, says he, "to glorify God." I here confidently appeal to the candor and good sense of my fellow creatures if this alleged cause of our creation has any visible connexion with our interest, with any event in which we can by the most forced construction have any beneficial participation? Why, then, in the name of reason and justice, contend that we are justly subjected to such a penalty? In my opinion this argument commits suicide with itself: we are created by an omniscient power, for an object solely his own—to praise him; in plain English, to minister to his vanity; and yet, forsooth, we are charitably, mercifully, and justly, by the enjoyment of this involuntary life, liable to the tremendous possibility, I may almost call it certainty, of having to endure an eternity of the most excruciating torments!

Such is Christianity; such are the dogmas which superstition and ignorance have fastened on the more credulous, unreflecting portion of the human race! The destruction of the world by fire, and the existence of a hell composed of elements the most dreadful to our senses, have always been favorite topics with Christians, [I speak of them as a whole, their party distinctions being unworthy of notice,] have ever been fundamental and standing tenets in their cruel and gloomy system of religion. According to that system, mankind, in the enjoyment of an existence in which it is impossible their will should be consulted, and without any mo-

tive or object to render it desirable on their part, but for the pretended, the ridiculous, purpose of feeding the ambitious passions of an invisible, an unknown, being, are yet subject to the inheritance of an eternal abode in a lake of fire and brimstone.

There is, indeed, one consideration which may encourage the friends of truth and free inquiry; which is, the expiration of that portion of time that includes all the periods, even those the most remote, fixed upon by ignorant and superstitious men for the completion of the childish and contemptible stories met with in what Jews and Christians call their sacred books, and which rhapsodies are by them denominated prophecies and revelations. This is certainly a remote prospect of relief; but it is a relief to suffering and deluded man which will most assuredly arrive. Then will the inhabitants of this portion of the universe discover the impositions that have so long been practised upon them; when they see neither the stars to fall, nor the earth to melt with fervent heat, nor the son of man coming in the clouds with great glory, &c. &c., they will exclaim, "Now indeed have we certain knowledge of what we have long suspected, that the most gross and improbable fictions have been palmed upon us by ignorant and interested men, who thousands of years ago were in vain opposed by the philosophy and morality of that day." Let no one suppose it to be improbable such a distant period should ever arrive. Time and space are infinite in duration and extent. This globe, in some form or other, is destined to run an eternal course. Matter never was created; never can, nor ever will be, annihilated. S.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Mr. Editor—G. H. E., in reply to my article on the immortality of the soul, (Corres. No. 26, v. 2,) says that "to those who believe it to be nothing but a name, the disbelief is already established, and that no extraordinary evil has arisen to them." Now I am acquainted with some very amiable and good men who hold this belief, and I suppose no evil has appeared to them; yet this does not prove but what their happiness might be increased by the introduction of new ideas, or that others might be happier by being educated with them. I think a moment's reflection will convince him that my system bears no analogy to lotteries; for I am as much opposed to bartering off present comfort for future happiness as he can be. I am no advocate for that belief in everlasting happiness which requires a man to be miserable in this life in order to be happy in the next; so far from it, that I wish every opinion brought to the test, and that decision made which will produce the greatest amount of happiness in this present life. By the expression "let the belief alone" I meant nothing more than simply a reference to the fact of its existence, and from that circumstance I took the position, that no reasoning was necessary to establish it; for, although I consider such opinions are injurious to the happiness of society, I hold in the most unequivocal terms every man has the right to freedom of expression.

G. H. E. is "surprised that a person so clear of prejudice should view the subject as I do," and says "it is folly to support a doctrine the truth

of which cannot be known." Now I can't say that I am surprised at him for believing in what I call annihilation, when I see so many instances of credulity in the world; but I could as easily believe in the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth, or in some of the heathen mythologies, as that any thing I can perceive in Nature ever ceases to exist, and in this I agree with G. H. E. in believing it "a folly to support a doctrine the truth of which cannot be known." Now, something does exist that we all understand to be the soul, and this something is as clear to my perception as the body: we understand it by the word life, or cause of motion in animal bodies. Now, if *nothing* cannot think, and that which thinks is *something*, and that *something* is the soul, then the soul is immortal, or annihilation exists; and, as I have no idea of annihilation, I am compelled to believe the former. I am not able to understand the Epicurean doctrine, that soul, or mind, is a quality that matter assumes under certain combinations. One of the known properties of visible matter is divisibility: now we do not know that soul, or mind, has this property, and what we do know makes against it. This idea of a quality seems too much like a "name," or a ghost like nothing, to move the body of man with the force it does. What ideas of activity or power can we attach to a "name," or a quality. A machine for propelling boats by steam is called a steam engine, yet the power of giving motion to the apparatus is not in the name; it is in the substance that acts on the inert properties of matter: so it appears the parts of matter that compose the body of man are acted upon by the soul, the substance that thinks; "the decay of the body affords evidence of the continued existence of mind; every atom of the body exists after death as fully as it existed before death;" and it is certainly not strange logic to infer the immortality of the soul from the analogy of the continued existence of the body, and how can we form any ideas of its annihilation, whatever it is, when we have not a single, solitary proof of the destruction of any thing else since the universe was formed.

The circumstance of man conceiving a state of eternal happiness is an evidence in its favor; for every truth that man has discovered about the goodness or greatness of the laws of Nature has exceeded his expectations, and every truth going to show the evil or bad construction of those laws has been less than his expectations. How the goodness and the greatness of Nature has manifested itself in the late astonishing developments of mind, in the arts and sciences, that bid fair to raise poverty beyond the reach of want, and scatter plenty o'er a happy land! A state of society now exists that at one period the most sanguine expectation could not have anticipated. The doctrine of priests and tyrants, that the many were born with "saddles on their backs," and the few with "boots and spurs" ready to ride—that human nature was corrupted with original sin, is now vanishing before the light of reason. Every truth that man discovers lessens evil, and increases happiness: now, admitting this fact, who can calculate the extent of happiness that man is destined to enjoy? for who can measure the resources of the human mind? Every new idea that we receive convinces us that there is a perpetual and everlasting tendency in all Nature toward harmony and perfection; and I believe if the mind of man could be turned inward to cultivate his own

resources, all his ideas of happiness would in time be realized—that this strong desire that every man feels for enjoyment, this fond hope, this longing after happiness, would be found to be a part of his nature.

7.

PHYSIOLOGY.

Mr. Editor—It is a remark no less true than common, that physicians are much inclined to be infidels. They owe this privilege not so much to their vocation as practitioners of the healing art, as to the studies which they are obliged to pursue preparatory to the exercise of it. They must study anatomy, and the anatomist receives nothing on trust. He carries his arguments on the point of his scalpel. They must study physiology, or the phenomena and laws of animal existence, and physiology admits no reasonings but those of close induction and analysis. He must discard all veneration for names and established opinions, and take nothing for granted which he cannot, if called on, prove. Fortified with such habits of reasoning, and trained to a prompt surrender of his prejudices whenever proofs are clear and strong, it is not surprising that the physician should made light of systems which even less thorough investigators have often seen cause to reject. This facility of detecting error, I have called the privilege of the medical professor, but it may be made the privilege of every free inquirer who will give a due share of attention to the studies I have pointed out. The reprint of Mr. Lawrence's lectures on physiology, zoology, and the natural history of man, which has just issued from the American press, furnishes me an opportunity and an inducement for calling the attention of your liberal readers to the importance of these subjects as aids to the great cause of truth and intellectual liberty. The author of these lectures treats of man as he is, a member of the great family of animals, subject with them to the same laws of growth, maturity, decay, and destruction, and not as an angel, or a being made a little lower than the angels—enjoying some privileges denied to them, but in all essentials partaking of their nature and destinies. He has no relish for those fine creations of fancy with which dreaming philosophers and religionists have striven to decorate human nature, but still appreciates properly our superiority over our brother animals. He recognizes no such distinction as that between reason and instinct; and if man must needs have a soul, he would claim it also for the brutes.

In making the phenomena of mind mere functions of the brain, he is supported by all the analogies of organs and functions throughout the body. For if a muscle may contract and a gland secrete its proper fluid by the properties of their own peculiar organization, there is not the shadow of a reason for supposing that the brain cannot perform the business of thinking without the help of any separate principle, resident in its organization. This is a home thrust at the vitals of religious delusion, and, as was to be expected, the bigots have poured out all the vials of their wrath upon the head of its author. His book was denied the protection of the law, and thus given by authority a prey to literary pirates. He himself was proscribed by a brother lecturer, as an asserter of dangerous and immoral opinions.

No one who loves to see error refuted, and a presumptuous philosophy exposed to ridicule, will regret the reading of this book. No one who loves to think independently can withhold his sympathies from him who has advocated so fearlessly and so well the cause of intellectual liberty. The professional reputation and private character of Mr. Lawrence have silenced the calumnies of the bigots, and proved triumphantly that religion forms no essential in the character of a great and good man.

It cannot be pretended that physiology will in every case produce the wished for conversion. Many will admit the necessary principles who, nevertheless, will not give themselves the trouble to follow out their legitimate consequences. There are some, too, who will cling madly to their early prejudices in spite of reason and philosophy. But I have never known a convert of physiology to relapse into bigotry, while a metaphysical doubter will not unfrequently retrace his steps, and pass to the extreme of credulity.

This book involves few technical terms, and is every way adapted to general perusal. It is a single octavo at a moderate price, though handsomely executed and illustrated by suitable engravings. Any one may find time to read, and few will want the means to buy it. I would earnestly recommend it to all free inquirers, and to all who would understand the true nature and condition of our race. Yours, J. D.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 22.

The Jews have borrowed from other Nations.—It has frequently been said, that petty enslaved states always endeavor to imitate their masters; that a weak and uncivilized people rudely conform to the customs of great nations. Cornwall apes London, London does not ape Cornwall. Can any thing be more natural than the supposition, that the Jews have borrowed what they could of the religious worship, laws, and customs of their neighbors? It is now quite certain, that their god whom we call Jehovah, pronounced by them *Yaho*, was the ineffable name of the god of the Phœnicians and Egyptians, and was known to be so by the ancients.

Clemens Alexandrinus, in the first book of his *Stromates*, relates, that those who entered the Egyptian temples, were compelled to carry a species of talisman about them, which was composed of this word *Yaho*; and when they had acquired a certain method of pronouncing this word, he who heard it fell down dead, or at least into a swoon. This is what the jugglers of the temple endeavored to persuade the superstitious. It is well known that the form of the serpent, the cherubims, the ceremony of the red cow, ablutions, since called baptism, linen robes reserved for the priests, fastings, abstinence from pork and other meats, and circumcision, were all imitations of the Egyptians.

The Jews confess that they were a long time without a temple, and that they had none for more than five hundred years after Moses, according to their own chronology, which is always erroneous. At length they invaded a small city, in which they built a temple in imitation of great na-

tions. What had they before? A box! This was customary among the Nomades, and the Canaanites of the interior, who were very poor. There was an ancient tradition among the Jews, that when they were Nomades; that is, wanderers in the deserts of Arabia Petrea, they carried a box containing a rude image of a god named Remphan, or a species of star cut out in wood. You will find traces of this worship in some of the prophets, and particularly in the pretended discourse which the "Acts of the Apostles" puts into the mouth of Stephen. (Acts vii. 43.)

Even according to the accounts of the Jews themselves, the Phœnicians, (whom they call Philistines,) had the temple of Dagon, before the Jewish troop had a house. If this were the case; if all their worship in the wilderness consisted in having a box to the honor of the god Remphan, who was nothing more than a star revered by the Arabs, it is clear, that the Jews in their origin were only a band of wandering Arabs, whose pillaging enabled them to establish themselves in Palestine; who afterwards formed a religion to their own taste; and who composed a history containing nothing but fables of the ancient Back or Bacheus, and gave their hero the name of Moses: but that we should revere these fables; that we should have made them the basis of our religion; and that these fables should still be credited in a philosophical age, is what raises the indignation of all wise men. The Christian church signs Jewish prayers, and burns those that adhere to the Jewish law! How pitiful, how contradictory, and how horrible!

Of Genesis.—All the nations by whom the Jews were encompassed had a theogony, a cosmogony, long before the Genesis of the Jews was taken from the ancient fables of their neighbors? Yaho the ancient god of the Phœnicians unravelled to chaos, the Khautereb; he arranged matter, Muth; he formed man with his breath, Calpi; he gave him a garden for his habitation, Aden or Eden; he forbade him to meddle with the great serpent Ophioneus, as we are told in the ancient fragment of Pherecidus. What a conformity with the Genesis of the Jews! Is it not natural to suppose that a petty ignorant people would, in the course of time, borrow the fables of the great people who invented the arts?

It was likewise a received opinion in Asia, that God had formed the world in six periods of time, which the Chaldeans, who were so long anterior to the Jews, called *six gahambars*. This was also an opinion of the ancient Indians. The Jews, then, who wrote Genesis, are merely imitators; they mixed their own absurdities with these fables; and we must confess, it is difficult for us to abstain from laughter when we hear of a serpent talking familiarly with Eve; of God speaking to the serpent; of God's promenade in the garden of Eden at noonday; of God making small clothes for Adam, and an apron for his wife Eve. All the rest appears equally senseless. Many Jews themselves are ashamed of these tales, and they have been considered by them as allegorical fables. How can we interpret literally what the Jews have regarded as allegories?

Neither the histories of judges, knights, nor any of the prophets quote a single passage of Genesis. None of them have spoken of Adam's rib being taken from his side, to make a woman of; nor of the tree of know-

ledge of good and evil ; nor of the serpent that tempted Eve ; nor of original sin ; nor, in short, of any of these imaginations. Once more : have we any rational motives for believing them ?

Their rhapsodies demonstrate, that they have pilfered all their notions from the Phœnicians, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, in the same way as they pilfered their goods, when they had it in their power. Even the name of *Israel* was borrowed from the Chaldeans, as Philo confesses in the first page of the narrative of his deputation to Caligula. These are his words, "the Chaldeans give to the righteous the name of Israel, *seeing God*." Yet we are such simpletons in the west, as to fancy that every thing which these eastern barbarians had stolen belonged exclusively to themselves.

Manners of the Jews.—If we pass from Jewish fables to Jewish manners, do we not find them as abominable as their tales are absurd ? According to their own confession, they are a troop of brigands, who carry into the wilderness all that they stole from the Egyptians. Joshua, their chief, passes the Jordan by a miracle similar to that of the Red Sea ; and for why ? To put fire and sword to a city he was an entire stranger to, the walls of which God caused to fall by the sound of trumpets.

The fables of the Greeks had more of humanity in them. Amphion built cities by the sound of his flute ; Joshua destroys them, and gives up to fire and sword, old men, women, children, and cattle. Was there ever a more senseless brutality ? He pardons only a prostitute who had betrayed her country. What occasion had he for the perfidy of this miserable woman, since the walls fell at the sound of his trumpet, which may be compared to the trumpet of Astolphus, that made every body run away from him ? We must remark, by the bye, that this woman called Rahab, the prostitute, was an ancestor of the Jew whom we have since transformed into a god, who likewise reckons himself a descendant of the incestuous Tamar, the impudent Ruth, and the adulterous Bathsheba.

We are then told, that this same Joshua smote thirty-one kings of the country ; that is, thirty-one village chiefs, who had defended their fire sides against this troop of assassins. If the author of this history had formed a design of rendering the Jews execrable among other nations, could he have adopted a surer method ? To add blasphemy to robbery and barbarity, the author dares say, that all these abominations were committed in the name and by the express command of God, to whom they were offered up as so many human sacrifices.

These are God's people ! Certainly the Hurons, Canadians, and Iroquois were philosophers of humanity compared to the children of Israel ; and yet it was to favor these monsters that the sun and moon stood still at noonday ! And for what ? To give time to pursue and slay the miserable Ammonites, who were already crushed to death by a shower of great stones, covering a space of five leagues, which God had thrown upon them from the sky. Is this the history of Gargantua ? Is this the history of God's people ? Is it not increasing this stupidity, to amuse ourselves by combating this detestable collection of fables, which are equally disgraceful to common sense, to virtue, to Nature,

and to the Deity? If a single adventure, related of this people, had unfortunately been true, all nations would have united to exterminate them; and if they be false, it is not possible to tell lies in a more stupid manner.

What shall we say of a Jephthah, who immolates his own daughter to his imaginary god; of the left handed Ehud, who assassinates Eglon his king, in the name of the Lord; of the divine Jael, who assassinates general Sisera, by driving a nail into his head; and of a drunken Samson, whom God favors with so many miracles? This last is a gross imitation of the fable of Hercules.

Shall we speak of a Levite, who brings his concubine on an ass, with straw and hay, into Gubo, which belonged to the tribe of Benjamin; and behold, the Benjamites wish to commit sodomy with this vile priest, in the same way as the Sodomites wished to violate the angels. (The illustrious author has forgot to speak of the angels of Sodom, yet this article was worthy of his attention. If ever there were any abominable extravagancies in the Jewish history, that of the angels, whom the magistrates, officers, and boys of a whole city wished absolutely to violate, is so horrible, that it cannot be paralleled by any heathen fable, and really makes one's hair stand an end. And yet they dare to write a commentary on these abominable tales! And they wish to make you respect them! They have even the insolence to pity the Brachmans of India, and the Magi of Persia, because God has not revealed these things to them, and because they were not God's people!) The Levite makes an arrangement, and abandons his mistress or concubine to them: they abuse her all night, and the next morning she dies. The Levite takes his knife, and cuts his concubine into twelve pieces, (a thing not very easily done,) and thence arises a civil war. The eleven tribes of Benjamin. Four hundred thousand soldiers! good God, in a territory which did not measure fifteen leagues in length by five or six in breadth! The Grand Seigneur never had half such an army. These Israelites exterminate the tribe of Benjamin, both old and young, women and girls, according to their laudable custom. Six hundred boys escape. It would not be proper to let one tribe perish, therefore six hundred girls, at least, must be given to these six hundred boys.

What do the Israelites do? There was in the neighborhood a small city named Jabez; they take it by surprise; kill all; massacre every thing, even the cattle; reserving only four hundred Benjamites! Two hundred boys remain to be provided for: it is agreed, that they shall ravish two hundred of the daughters of Shiloh, when they go to dance at the gates of the city! (Judges xxi. 21.)

Come on, Tillotson, Sherlock, Clarke, and the rest of your tribe: say something to justify these cannibal fables; prove to us that these are all types and figures announcing Jesus Christ!

To be continued.

“THANKSGIVING DAY.”

Mr. Editor—I have just reexamined the constitution of the state of New York, and, after giving it a good search, I am unable to find out

that clause which makes it the *duty* of the governor, to issue his "Proclamation" annually, for the purpose of regulating our religious duties on a certain day. But, as my labor has been in vain, you will do me a favor in pointing out that part of the constitution which authorizes such an act. For, as far as I can comprehend that charter of our rights, every such proclamation appears to me to be an act of usurpation; and if I was the governor, and made use of such a measure, I should feel apprehensive of an impeachment, for making such an attempt to unite our church and state, which is forbidden by the constitution of the United States.

Such "Proclamations" may be relished in the priestridden states of New England, where every court and training day is ushered in with the same kind of religious cant as their "thanksgiving day;" but is not New York too enlightened to become a mere satellite to that frenzy of New England? or to sanction any longer any of those holidays which produce more vice than virtue? For I have heard a gentleman from Connecticut confess that there were more illegitimate children begotten in the eastern states on their "thanksgiving day" than in all the rest of the year—the natural result of the union of the overflowing tables and bottles with the canting worship used on that day.

A FRIEND TO MENTAL LIBERTY.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1828.

PAINE'S BIRTHDAY.

Continued from page 25.

After the memory of Mr. Paine, as mentioned in our last, a poetical "address, spoken at the anniversary dinner [in London] to commemorate the birthday of Thomas Paine, 29th January, 1821, by J. W. Dunstone," was recited by Mr. John H. Bowie.

The following toasts were then given:

2. The People—The genuine fountain of power, and the only foundation of a good and wise government.

3. The "Age of Reason," and may it produce the "Rights of Man."

The subjoined ODE, written for the occasion, was sung by Mr. Bruce:

Wake the loud, symphonious strain;
 Let its echoes long remain
 A tribute to immortal PAINE,
 His genius and his fame.
 Tho' no confed'rates of our band
 Are rank'd the mighty of the land,
 We unite with heart and hand
 His honor to proclaim.

He the enfranchis'd mind has freed
 From the bigot's erring creed,
 Left us works that we may read,
 And truth herself explore:

Tho' many triumph'd at his fall,
 They whose minds were yet in thrall,
 His merits overlive the pall,
 Respected evermore.

Tho' our numbers are but few,
 To Nature and to science true,
 Give us the meed to-whom 'tis due,
 And let it there remain.
 Above his sod our hearts shall grace
 A trophy o'er his resting place,
 Nor time shall evermore efface
 The memory of PAINE.

The Chairman then gave

4. A free and liberal Press—The terror of despots—the glory of intellectual man.

5. May the sun of reason speedily pierce through the dark clouds of superstition, and illuminate every part of the habitable globe.

Ode—"Men whose sires for freedom bled"—by the company.

6. The memory of George Washington.

Song—"Hail! Great Republic"—by Mr. Pares.

7. May the edifices erected to prolong the age of delusion, bigotry, falsehood, and oppression, soon be converted into temples of science, reason, and philosophy.

8. The memory of all those Patriots who signed the "Declaration of Independence."

Ode—"Hail to the time when the mist is receding"—by the company.

9. Soldiers at the plough, kings in the mines, lawyers at the spinning genney, and priests in heaven.

10. Instead of toleration, perfect freedom in theological, political, and philosophical opinion.

11. The memory of Thomas Jefferson, Elihu Palmer, Benjamin Franklin, William Penn, and other American liberals.

12. May those persecuted victims who have the courage and virtue to disseminate the sublime truths of the immortal Paine, be rewarded by the present generation, and honored by posterity.

13. The Republicans of every Country, and may they shake hands over the grave of the last tyrant.

Song—"The Tyrant's Fall"—by Mr. Pares.

14. Simon Bolivar.

15. The memory of Voltaire, Mirabeau, Volney, Hume, Gibbon, Bellingbrooke, Rousseau, Condorcet, Boulanger, Tindal, Barlow, Clarke, Helvetius, Diderot, D'Alembert,—William Wallace, William Tell, Hampden, Andrew Marvel, Wat Tyler, Sydney, Edward Fitzgerald, Major Cartwright,—Shakspeare, Pope, Goldsmith, Robert Burns, Percy Blythe Shelly, and Lord Byron; and all such philosophers, patriots, and poets.

16. May the unextinguishable lights of philosophy soon obtain universal ascendancy over the human mind.

Ode—"O what can relieve, when in sorrow we languish?"—by the company.

17. May revolutions never cease until tyranny is extinct.

18. The memory of Mary Woolstencroft, authoress of the "Rights of Women."

19. May the clouds which now obscure the sun of liberty in Europe, and other parts of the globe, be dissolved, but not in blood.

Ode—"To Liberty's enraptured sight"—by the company.

20. Success to the brave Greeks, and may they be speedily delivered from the gloomy despotism under which they have so long groaned.

21. The Ladies now present—They have honored us with their countenance, and added grace to our assembly.

Song—"Green grow the rushes O"—by Mr. Bruce.

22. De Witt Clinton—The patron of science, and friend of liberal principles.

The Secretary stated that he had been prevented by sickness from preparing himself, as he intended, to address the meeting; but he would read a letter received that morning from Mr. Joseph Lawton, the personal friend of Mr. Richard Carlile, containing a toast, which, he was persuaded, would be favorably received by the company. The Secretary then read as follows:

Dover, N. H., January 26, 1828.

Dear Sir—Having seen it advertised in your last number of the "Correspondent," for Jan. 19, that the members of the "Free Press Association" intend to commemorate the birthday of Thomas Paine, I hope you will allow me, as an individual, to make known to you, and the members of the Free Press Association assembled on such an important occasion, the great pleasure I feel, and that my mind responds to the sentiments and principles such a celebration is highly calculated to propagate. I feel sorry my local situation prevents me from participating in your sentimental banquet, and paying *due* respect to the memory of the champion of the principles of republicanism. It is a matter of deep regret, that the priestly influence in America should so long have succeeded in suppressing all due acknowledgements to the talents and moral worth of this great philanthropist, and that the greatest honors and continued national devotion should be awarded to the *sword*, or the physical power, to the utter neglect of the *pen*, or the moral talent; but the time is fast approaching, I believe, when the *funeral* of THOMAS PAINE, or reward for services, will not bear comparison nor a moment's reflection. The sword of the general will die with him; but the moral sword of the pen, that cuts up false principles, as long as the art of delineating characters exists, will go on "conquering and to conquer," until the whole world acknowledge "Common Sense" and the "Rights of Man;" which will consummate the "Age of Reason." Through the press of Richard Carlile in London, and the activity of his agents, the principles, political and theological, of Thomas Paine are making rapid progress in Great Britain. The 29th of January in England is ushered in by the ringing of bells, &c., and is a day of rejoicing to the monarchists, it being the day George the Fourth was proclaimed king; and to the republicans, for publicly *proclaiming* the principles of Thomas Paine. I have several times in Man-

chester had the pleasure of witnessing numerous meetings to do justice to the merits and talents of Paine. The Free Press Association being acquainted with the revolutionary proceedings of this country, will know well how to appreciate his talents and industry. I send you a sentiment, which, if you think it proper, or suitable to the occasion, you will much oblige me by reading:

23. Richard Carlile, the Champion of the Free Press of England—May he live long to confound the superstitiousists ORALLY, and may his great moral triumph over persecution, and for free discussion, be a lesson to the persecutors of the incarcerated Robert Taylor.

Yours respectfully,

JOSEPH LAWTON.

This toast was drank with three times three. After which the Chairman gave,

24. The Paterson Reading Society, the Philadelphia Society of Liberal Friends, and the Cincinnati Society for Mutual Instruction in Natural Science.

25. Robert Owen—May his success in the cause of humanity be commensurate with his perseverance and generosity.

26. The memory of Cato, Brutus, Cassius, Cicero, Demosthenes, Marcus Aurelius, and all such patriots and orators among the ancients.

During the regular proceedings, the following Song, written for the occasion, was sung by Mr. Bruce:

When oceans of blood through whole ages had flown,
 Beneath the foul dagger of dread
 Which base superstition held mask'd in her throne,
 That swam in the blood she had shed,
 Sad Reason, disgusted, far west bent her flight,
 To shun so unhallowed a scene,
 And saw with a smile in fair Liberty's light
 Arise the pure spirit of PAINE.

No crown on his head, but a galaxy, shone
 Of Truth in fair Freedom's defence;
 The hearts of mankind were the patriot's throne,
 And the sword that he used "Common Sense."
 Hypocrisy's poinard was seen through its cloak,
 As on the bright radiance he came,
 And chains of oppression to ashes were broke
 At the power speaking sound of his name.

What sovereignty is, and from whence its true birth,
 Oh, PAINE! 'twas thy pen that defin'd,
 And show'd that no right is divine on this earth
 But the glorious "Rights of Mankind."
 When dark Superstition and Prejudice cease
 To trammel the mind with their chain,
 Amid an elysium of joy and of peace,
 Blest man shall be grateful to PAINE.

About 9 o'clock the ladies retired from the orchestra ; when the following volunteer toasts were given :

By James Dean. The "Free Press Association"—May it continue firm and harmonious ; then will its object, to arrest the progress of bigotry and disseminate liberal principles, be attended with success.

By the same. The Correspondent—Let every liberal minded man subscribe for a copy.

By Robert L. Jennings. Frances and Camilla Wright, who, to liberate the poor enslaved Africans in this "land of liberty," risked their reputation, their fortune, and their lives—May our daughters equal their talents, and imitate their virtues.

By Philanthropist. Boyer, the Liberator of Hayti.

By Thomas G. Spear, Printer. May reason be the guide of our lives, truth honesty the rule to compose our conduct, and our character corrected by copying virtue and good example ; and thus always pulling up till the sorts are run out of the fount of life, then gently lifted, imposed, and justified in the chase of death, be laid aside as dead matter, till distributed by the hands of Nature, to furnish fairer impressions for editions of some future and better volumes.

By Solomon H. Sanborn. Religious Revivals—the "darkness visible" of superstitious folly—May they quickly be supplanted by "revivals" of Reason.

By Francis Pares. May moral courage never be wanting in expressing our opinions.

By — Robinson. Ignorance, and its offspring, Distrust—May they speedily be superseded by knowledge and confidence.

By H. C. Atwood. The Pen of the immortal Paine, victorious in the dark age of '76—May it prove a deadly weapon to priestly domination.

By George Anderson. The Correspondent—the beacon that guides weary and affrighted travellers to a haven of rest—May it blaze until its rays have illuminated the world.

By — Frazee. "The Sun" that stood still for Joshua, and went back on the dial of Ahas—We can do without him in America.

By George H. Evans. Benjamin Franklin—Morality without religion.

By William S. Cannon. Christianity—A system of slavery, an enemy to freedom, and a cause of persecution.

By John H. Bowie. Mistress Lot—May female curiosity never lead to such salt consequences.

By Joseph L. Hays. Independency and a genteel sufficiency.

By a Friend—Free Inquirers—May they ever stand firm in the cause of truth as the rock of Plymouth, on which our forefathers first landed.

A number of volunteer songs were also sung, and the party broke up at an early hour, highly delighted with the proceedings of the day. The dinner, which was excellent, was served up in the French style, by Mr. Broyer ; and we can truly say, in the language of the *New York Enquirer*, that there "never was a public dinner given, in any country, conducted with greater propriety and decorum."

MISCELLANEOUS.

Religion.—All the evils with which mankind have been, or are now, afflicted, in a social point of view, arise from their ignorance, and the consequent impositions practised upon them by their more cunning fellows. The few treat the many as animals of another species. Religions are made for the benefit of the few, and for the purpose of taxing the many: the latter derive no kind of benefit from them, but an incalculable mass of evil. You cannot make a religion without the aid of a phantom. All religions are socially pernicious, on the principle that they form a means of power and oppression—unnatural power, and an oppression that paralyzes the best efforts of industry. If I were asked what is the chief cause of poverty among the industrious, I should say religion. Look at Ireland: look at Spain: look at France, Italy, Germany: look even at England. Simple political governments could exercise no such undue influence on the multitude as we have seen in those countries, without the aid of priests and religion. Mankind would have inquired into their political rights long before this time, if no religion had been preached to them, and if they had not been terrified with the horrors threatened by priestcraft, if they dared to judge or act for themselves, in opposition to the will of their rulers. It is a very low calculation to say, that religion, in all nations and in all ages, on an average, has caused a taxation equal to all other taxations.

Christianity has had a long run. It is becoming stale. Its teeming time is over. It totters, and happy for man will be the day when it falls to rise no more. Since it was found by Constantine to be a proper religion for tyrants to perfect slavery with is now about fifteen hundred years. It gained ground rapidly after his adoption of it, as the church of the state, and the miracle of his conversion was equal to the time of three hundred years preaching. He sanctified and made it holy, with power and cunning; and the priests have held, with a deadly grasp, every particle of consequence they received from his influence and duplicity. Yet, it is said, that he laughed at them on his death bed, and died a pagan. Since his time, the priests, the church, and their god (they are all one, a trinity in unity) have been at war with human liberty, peace, and happiness. The story of human woes begotten by them fills all the histories of Europe, and nearly comprehends that of all the earth. As reason advances, the church recedes, and from its total extinction will be dated the era of human happiness.

Death.—The grand leveller of human distinctions. Armed with his dreadful scymetar, he mows down princes and peasants indiscriminately; but he is partial to sorrow and misfortune, visiting the wretched under their afflictions, and relieving them from all their troubles, while at the same instant he will hurl a tyrant, in the plenitude of omnipotence, from his throne, and level the conqueror of worlds in the dust. He will stand invisible at the elbow of kings, when they are meditating the most wasteful and unbounded schemes of ambition and conquest, the slavery of their

own subjects, and the extermination of distant empires. Death in an instant blasts their infernal projects, and sends them to their account, with all their enormities on their heads.—*Pigott.*

Sermon.—A little thin book, with a black cover, "wherein one may read strange things;" such as arguments in favor of damnation, eternity of hell torments, and other matters equally amusing. They are made so as to last exactly fifteen minutes by the clock. The deliverer of these entertaining and instructive lectures is, for the most part, a *black leg*; though some are good kind of men; but I have seen "such *things* that mount the pulpit with a skip, and then skip down again."—*Ib.*

The Root of all Morality. A modern philosopher, of no small authority, has shown very forcibly, that the efficacy of moral instruction, and consequently of morality, is by no means diminished by this doctrine: for, says he, "If the human mind were not ruled by motives, this art could not possibly have any existence."

Free Press Association.—A general meeting of the Association will be held, in the Temple of Arts, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 10th instant, at 10 o'clock forenoon, for the purpose of considering the report of the special committee, appointed to revise the constitution.

The *theological* lectures will be continued in the afternoon of the same day, and following Sundays, at half past 2 o'clock. The *scientific* lectures will be resumed on Sunday the 17th instant, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 4.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 16, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BIBLE RECORDS.

Mr. Editor—A series of inquiries in your No. 24, of 5th January, has set me to thinking. The questions appear to be intended as leading to necessary negatives or affirmatives; but they do not in every instance fulfil the purpose. There is not one man in ten thousand who ventures to think on the theology that prevails through Christendom, and it is only among the few who think freely that the conclusions of the writer (Aristides) will in any case obtain.

Those who are habituated to think at large know very well that the books which compose the Hebrew scriptures are not the compositions, original or abridged, of one man, one language, one country, or one age; but of many men, several languages, and different countries and ages; and that, as those writings are now promulgated, they are only abridgements of other legends, and compiled from the discordant dogmas, dreams, and mystical theology of nations most opposite in their theories and doctrines.

It is impossible to prove the originality of the records of the Jews as they are received by Christians and Mahomedans. Their internal evidence, as well as evidence more absolute, prove the discordancy and inconsistency of their character.

A question asked in the second paragraph of the essay of Aristides appears to me in contradiction with itself—it is this: “If the Hebrew legends be an original record, must it not be the oldest record still existing of past times?” It must be obvious to the writer that the first question, proved affirmatively or negatively, does not infer the consequence sought. If it be shown, as it has been by some hundreds of writers, that the Jewish legends are compilations of comparatively recent manufacture, the question put is answered that it must not be the oldest record of past times; and though the productions which formed the basis of them be destroyed, and the abstracts existing be very old, or older than the period to which they have been traced, we must be first acquainted with the legends and ancient theology of other nations, before the question can be decided. The Jewish legends may be the oldest in the judgments of those who know no other, or who, knowing, deny their authenticity, and seek to build an authorotative superstructure upon the denial of those which go to divest the Jewish legends of the sanctity which it is common with all religiously educated nations to ascribe to their own peculiar notions.

To be able to judge with rational effect on the opinions of any people, it would be necessary as well to know what they say of your notions.

Examine the rationality of your own. All people educated in particular doctrines consider their own as the original, most ancient, and most pure. This is as true of modern sects of Christians and moslems, as of the Jews and pagans, as they are called. The modern sectary argues that his interpretation is the true doctrine of the primitive church, and thus a hundred sects aspire to be exclusively the only true general and original church. The pharisees and the sadducees asserted the same exclusive superexcellence. The Mahomedans have as many hundred sects as the Christians, besides the two grand divisions of *sheas* and *soonies*, who stand in about the same kind of concurrence in the theology of Mahomed, that the Calvinists and catholics hold under the common claimants to Christianity.

The learned Mahomedan avows his faith in certain of the Jewish books, and under this avowal places himself alongside of Moses; refers to the Bible to sustain polygamy, circumcision, certain other observances of cleanliness, and self denial. The zealous Christian professes to consider the Jewish books as inspired, and makes them by a general declaration his religious law; but though the Mahomedan and Christian agree in the sanctity and inspiration of the volume, the Christian disclaims polygamy and circumcision, notwithstanding the *sacred books* sanction and furnish the examples.

It is true that Mahomedan and Christian doctors assume a new inspiration, by which they affect to discard a part of what is sacred, and to rectify and put in another fashion the matters which they discard severally. Their mode of doing so, or the strange credulity and cullibility of rational beings on these topics, is truly amazing. In the common transactions of life, the humblest half lettered clown could not be imposed on in such a manner; but Mahomedans, and Jews, and Christians have been taught to massacre, enslave, and hate each other—though all professing to believe in the sanctity of the books they refer to in common.

What merits particular notice in reference to these agreements and disagreements, is that propaganda spirit which is known under the names of Bible societies and missions among the heathen. What must an Asiatic, Moslem, or Gentoo think of the zeal which spreads abroad books and examples, in which the creator is represented as giving up men, women, and children to indiscriminate slaughter and misery, as a part of the Christian inculcation by the zeal and contribution of pietists, whose missionaries teach the unlawfulness of polygamy, and peace and charity with all men. The missionaries who obtain sober, comprehending hearers have a sad task to reconcile such adverse doctrines; and whenever they have obtained earnest hearers, the Jewish books are usually discarded, and the supernatural parts of the Christian books are purged, the moral parts retained, the rest treated as incomprehensible and not consistent or practical.

In relation to the antiquity spoken of, and from which I have unintentionally strayed, I have never been so fortunate as to find any one, and I have inquired with sincerity of many, who could satisfy my understanding as to the means by which the writers of the Hebrew legends acquired such circumstantial details of the works of creation—I mean the six days' works (which some learned men further perplex, by giving to *each day*

a period in actual time equal to a *thousand years*.) How was the journal kept? by whom? was the reporter present at the days' work? and how came the Hebrew writers by the minutes? Those who wish to assert the originality and antiquity of the Hebrew books resort to inspiration! People of this description entertain most preposterous ideas of the Almighty; but they have no other means to accommodate incomprehensibility, than by reducing the God of heaven and earth to act a satire on his own works; and while omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence are his attributes, they make him act the part of an itinerant conjurer.

But I am informed by the 9th and 10th paragraphs in page 370, same article, that "the three first chapters of the Genesis are translations from a fabulous Greek history, and modelled after the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus." I avow my ignorance of these Greek originals, and should be gratified by being made acquainted with their name and character in as few words as possible, or where they are to be found.

If such books exist in the Greek, as stated by Aristides, they may be compared with the more ample and more circumstantial text of the *Ezour Vadam* of the Bramins, in which may be found the first book of Genesis, word for word, only more amply detailed and more poetical.

I shall only offer a few more words on this subject. The missionaries who visit Asia resort to the denial of the antiquity of the Brahminical books; but they have not been successful: those and many other books, which carry the knowledge of literature and several sciences, particularly astronomy, beyond the epocha of the Israelites, exist; and the pious have had no other expedient left than to pronounce those ancient works to be forgeries. But these dishonest resorts are foiled by the concurrent evidence of works in other departments of literature; among others, those of music, the drama, and astronomy. It is scarcely conceivable with what wanton malignity and wrath the literature of Asia has been assailed by those pietists who labor to circulate the songs of Solomon, the meekness of Moses, and the wisdom of David!

MENU.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Mr. Editor—Although Z. (in the last number of the Correspondent) has rejoined at some length to my reply to his article on the immortality of the soul, he has not settled the question to my satisfaction. I agree with him that although "some amiable and good men hold this belief, [i. e. the disbelief in the immortality of the soul,] and suffer no evil in consequence; yet this does not prove that their happiness might not be increased by the introduction of new ideas." But I deny that this doctrine of the soul's immortality is a *new* idea to many disbelievers; and if it were a new idea, and should lead to a belief, I am still at a loss to imagine how the mere belief could produce happiness, unless all happiness results from the anticipation of good, instead of the actual enjoyment, which I deny. I admit that a certain amount of happiness proceeds from the anticipation of benefits within the reach of human probability; but this cannot be the case with the belief of the doctrine in question.

I did not say that the system of Z. bore any analogy to lotteries: what I meant to show by my illustration was, that a belief in a future inevita-

ble good, ~~superior~~ to any thing that could possibly accrue to the believer previous to the period of its anticipation, would tend to relax his ordinary rational exertions, and thereby deprive him of the motives for benefiting himself and society, which he would otherwise be actuated by.

I cannot conceive why Z. should, from the existence of any belief, take "the position that no reasoning was necessary to establish it;" and thence infer that it should be "let alone." A belief must of necessity be entertained by some, to whom it is "established," and to no others; and those with whom it is not established should never "let it alone," until it is established also to them, or proved by them to be erroneous. The cause of truth will always stand the test of examination, and ever will shine more resplendant after the scrutiny: it is only that of error which will thrive by being "let alone."

Z. is surprised at me for believing in what he calls "annihilation;" but I can assure him that I have no more idea of "annihilation" than he has, and believe the word (among others, such as devil, angel, spirit, ghost, soul, &c.) to be the offspring of ignorance and superstition, and entirely devoid of rational comprehensibility. Therefore, I believe with him that nothing "in Nature ever ceases to exist," or becomes annihilated.

But, says Z., "something does exist that we all understand to be the soul: we understand it by the word *life*." This interpretation of the meaning of the word soul, in my opinion, at once destroys his argument in favor of its *immortality*; for, if the soul is the life—as life is a necessary property of matter—the soul is material, and exists not but in connection with matter, and beasts, birds, fishes, and even minerals and vegetables, (all possessing life,) have souls as well as men—none of which can be immortal. I admit that "*nothing* cannot think, and that which thinks is *something*;" but that *something* is the mind, which is a quality matter assumes under fortuitous combinations, or perhaps is a fundamental property of it. "One of the known properties of matter is divisibility;" another is mind; but it is no more necessary that the mind should possess divisibility, than that the property of divisibility should possess mind, or the thinking property.

"The parts of matter that compose the body of man (says Z.) are acted upon by the soul, *the substance that thinks*." Thus, as mind is the thinking property, and as according to Z.) the soul is the life, he makes life, mind, and soul mean one and the same thing; which to my view is a very strange amalgamation of terms. And if the soul is "*the substance that thinks*," it must necessarily be material as well as the body; and what is material cannot be immortal. Again: if the soul means either the life or the mind, it cannot be immortal; for both these properties become extinct with the decomposition of the body. Then, if the soul can neither be the life nor the mind, which I presume must be clear to every reflecting person, it is necessary first to have a precise definition of what the soul is, and what are its properties; in other words, whether it has any actual existence. Until this definition is given, all discussion about its immortality must be premature; for, though its existence "is as clear to Z. as the body," yet to me it is utterly incomprehensible. The only reasonable conclusion I can arrive at is, that "the soul and its immortality are the fictions of poets," and mean nothing of which rational beings can form any conception.

G. H. E.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 41.

Jewish Manners, under their Kings and Pontiffs.—The Jews obtain a king in spite of the priest Samuel, who does all he can to preserve his usurped authority, and he has the hardihood to say, that “to choose a king is to reject God.” (1 Sam. viii. 7.)

At length a herdsman, who sought his father’s asses, is elected king by lot. The Jews were then under the yoke of the Canaanites; they had never had a temple; their sanctuary was an ark that could be put into a cart. (1 Sam. vi. 11.)

The Canaanites had taken their ark from them, at which God was much displeased; yet he, nevertheless, suffered them to take it, but, to be revenged, he gave the piles to the conquerors, and sent mice into their fields. The victors appeased God by returning him his ark, accompanied with five golden mice. (1 Sam. vi. 4.)

No vengeance nor sacrifice could be more worthy of the Jewish god. He pardons the Canaanites, but kills fifty thousand and seventy of his own people for having looked into the ark. (1 Sam. vi. 19.)

It is under these propitious circumstances that Saul is elected king of the Jews. In their miserable country there was neither sword nor spear; the Canaanites or Philistines did not permit their Jewish slaves even to sharpen their ploughshares and axes; they were forced to apply to the Philistine laborers for this assistance; (1 Sam. xiii. 19, 20;) and yet we are told that king Saul had, at first, an army of three hundred thousand men, with whom he gained a great battle. (1 Sam. xi. 8.) Our Gulliver has similar fables, but not such contradictions.

In another battle Saul comes to terms with the pretended king Agag. The prophet Samuel arrives and asks, in the name of the Lord, “wherefore didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, to slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass?” (1 Sam. xv. 3.) And he takes a hatchet and hews king Agag in pieces. (1 Sam. xv. 33.) If such an action were true, what kind of people and priests were the Jews? Saul, who was reproved by the Lord because he had not himself slain king Agag, his prisoner, goes at length to fight against the Philistines, after the death of the meek prophet Samuel. He consults a witch respecting the success of the battle. It is known that witches can raise ghosts. This witch brings out of the ground the ghost of Samuel; but this merely regards the philosophy of the Jews. Now for their morality.

A player of the harp, for whom the Deity had caught a tender affection, causes himself to be anointed king during Samuel’s lifetime: he revolts against his sovereign, and, as the scripture tells us, collects four hundred wretches. “Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him.” (1 Sam. xxii. 2.) This was a man after God’s own heart; so the first thing he does is to assassinate a farmer, named Nabal, because he refused to pay contributions. He marries Nabal’s widow, and eighteen other women, without reckoning concubines. He goes to an enemy of his own country, king Achish, who receives him well; and as a recompense for this kind reception he sacks the villages of the allies of

Achish whom he persuades that he has not meddled with any towns except such as belonged to the Hebrews. We must confess, that highway-men are less culpable in the eyes of men; but the ways of the Jewish God are not like our ways.

The good king David robs Saul's son, Ishbosheth, of his crown. He causes Mephibosheth, son of his protector, Jonathan, to be assassinated. He delivers up to the Gibeonites two sons of Saul, and five of his grandsons, to be put to death. He assassinates Uriah, to screen his adultery with Bathsheba, and yet this abominable Bathsheba was the mother of Solomon, who was an ancestor of Jesus Christ!

The remainder of the Jewish history is nothing but a tissue of consecrated crimes. Solomon begins by killing his brother Adonijah. If God granted to this Solomon the gift of wisdom, he appears to have refused him the gifts of humanity, justice, continence, and honor. He has seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines. The song imputed to him is written in the style of these indecent books, which are calculated to put modesty to the blush. It is altogether about bobbies, and kisses on the mouth, a belly like a heap of wheat, voluptuous attitudes and agitations! At length he finishes by saying, "We have a little sister, and she has no breasts. What shall we do for our sister in the day when she shall be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar." (Solomon's Song, viii. 8, 9.) Such were the manners of the wisest man among the Jews, or, at least, the manners imputed to him out of respect by miserable rabbins, and Christian divines, whose notions are still more absurd. At length, to unite an excess of ridicule with this excess of immodesty, the priests have decided, that the belly, the bobbies, and kisses of the Shulamite, are an emblem and a type of the marriage of Jesus Christ with his church!

Of all the kings of Judah and Samaria, there were very few of them who were not either assassins or assassinated, until this den of robbers, who massacred one another in the public places and the temple during the time that Titus besieged them, fell under the iron chains of the Romans, with the rest of this miserable people of God, of whom five sixths had long been dispersed over Asia, and sold in the markets of the Roman cities, each Jew being valued at the price of a pig; an animal which was certainly less impure than this nation, if it were such as its historians and prophets represent it.

No one can deny that the Jews have written these abominations; and when we thus assemble them before our eyes, our hearts revolt at them. These, then, are the heralds of Providence, the forerunners of the reign of Jesus. Sayest thou, O Abbadie, that all the Jewish history is a prediction of the church; that all the prophets have foretold Jesus? Let us, then, examine the prophets.

To be continued.

Tartarus.—A place in hell set apart for kings and ministers, who lord it over their subjects with an imperious, cruel, and iniquitous domination.—*Pigott.*

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1828.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

ON NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

By Robert L. Jennings.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen—The proposition which I intend to maintain is, that the increasing study of natural philosophy will eventually destroy the Christian religion. This subject, therefore, presents itself in the following syllogism, viz. : The study of natural philosophy dispels ignorance and superstition. The Christian religion is based on ignorance and superstition : therefore, the increasing study of natural philosophy will eventually destroy the Christian religion.

By natural philosophy, Mr. Chairman, I mean, the consideration of the powers and properties of natural bodies, and their actions on one another. In proportion as these powers and properties become known, so do mankind become more intelligent, more virtuous, and more happy. It is, therefore, a duty which a man owes to himself, in common with that due to his fellow beings, to facilitate the acquirement of this knowledge by every class in society ; for, in proportion as others become intelligent and happy, happiness will be reacted on himself. I am aware that this policy would jeopardize the pecuniary interest of God's self styled servants, and others who fatten upon the ignorance, the viciousness, and the misery of mankind ; because, were all men but themselves intelligent and necessarily virtuous, " Othello's occupation would be gone." No rag-bag deacon would collect the hard earned pence of honest poverty ; no Peter's fees, nor widow's mites, would be screwed out of the pockets of the bewildered heaven seeking travellers. No, but the reverends' black silk gowns, which now stream in the wind to attract the eyes of our Broadway belles, would be converted into homespun jackets ; while their delicate jewel bedecked fingers, and cadaverous faces, would wear a more temperate, but more sunburnt look. Of a truth, however, they would be no losers, for Nature bears not to be tampered with with impunity ; and for their loss of dominion, physical ease, and *pelf*, they would possess enviable health, and serenity of mind, to which now they are generally strangers.

That natural philosophy is coeval with the existence of animated Nature, is known by the fact of every animal's natural curiosity to know the properties and uses of every thing which is presented to him, and from man's desire to know the principles upon which all his actions are performed, and those of the bodies by which his habitation is surrounded. In the infancy of human existence, man first sought the means of gratifying his natural desires ; but, gradually enlarging the sphere of his vision from himself to things around him, he fixed his lingering and wondering eyes on objects more remote ; and in the unsophisticated school of Nature began to study the properties, the influences, and the uses of the sun, moon, and stars. This, as well as his knowledge of the productions of the earth, was necessarily progressive, and forced upon him by the varie-

ty of their motions in causing day and night, and by their influence on the earth through the varied seasons; but, as these distant objects were only subject to the operation of one sense, man was easily deceived, and his imagination amply supplied the deficiency. Hence by analogy he conceived that the sky was a vast arched body of colored glass, its edges resting upon the tops of the mountains at the extreme boundary of the earth, and divided into the first, second, and third crystalline heavens. In the first, the sun and moon were placed; in the second, the planets and larger stars; and in the third heaven, (where St. Paul was carried,) the smaller stars were located; that the moon and stars were lit at night, as our lamplighters light our lamps, and the whole whirled round this earth once in twenty-four hours, for the convenience of God's most favored people here below. From that natural principle which disposes us to like that which contributes to our comfort, man at that early period began to reverence the sun, as the great source of life, and this worship has been continued under varied forms to this moment, of which the Christian religion no doubt is a remnant. At a very early period of history we find that the Chaldean, Egyptian, Hindoo, and Chinese priests had reduced natural philosophy to a science, and by their *mathematical* knowledge, which they kept from the world, predicted celestial changes that were necessarily fulfilled: hence they obtained from the uninitiated the reputation of knowing the will of the ruling destinies of man. Whether this thought was suggested by the people on discovering their skill, or whether their skill was exhibited to produce this thought on the people, is not a subject of inquiry; they advantaged themselves of it, however, and pretended that the common occurrences of life were subject to the movements of surrounding worlds; hence astrologers in all nations obtained an influence over public opinion which rendered them the desirable tools of despots, and eventually prophets and priests to the people; as it is among many of the northern nations to this day. The knowledge of the true state of the earth, and surrounding bodies, being so very limited, arose from the fact that their intercourse with others was mostly by land, for the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, and the *shores* of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans were the utmost boundaries of their maritime knowledge; and although Pythagoras and Ptolemy have some claims to the discovery of the true figure of this earth; though Pliny and other writers speak of a vast island stretching along the coast of Europe and Africa, of which England, the Canaries, and the Cape de Verds are but the tops of the highest mountains, yet it remained for a Galileo aided by his telescope, and a Columbus with his compass, to stamp the philosophy of the ancients in the teeth of prejudice and bigotry as unsound and false; and lead to the confirming of the Copernican system, by the voyages of Cook and Anson round the world. Some writers have given the Babylonians also the credit of discovering the true figure and motion of this earth; but this I think very improbable. The Jews had resided seventy years among the Babylonians, until they had even *forgot* their own language, and thirty-nine fortieths of those who *returned* to Jerusalem, about 460 years before the real or supposed time of Christ, were born in captivity. Then it was that the books attributed to Mr. Moses, giving an account of the fancied creation, universal deluge, &c. WERE FIRST COM-

POSED, under the inspection of Mr. Ezra, the high priest; and at least 1000 years after Mr. Moses is said to have hid himself to death. Now the account in the blessed books, which never told a lie, is very consistent with the *ancient opinions* of the Egyptians and Babylonians, but so very *contrary to facts*, that I cannot conceive that the Babylonians, the probable teachers of their prisoners the Jews, could have had very correct ideas on this subject. Hence it was that the advocates of the Christian religion incarcerated poor Galileo in a dungeon, for advancing philosophical truths which proved the reputed Mosaical account of the creation a mere fabrication, as destitute of truth as philosophically incorrect. We need not be surprised at the influence the astrologers or priests have exercised over the people in all ages, nor that the most intelligent should be deceived by their combined ignorance and craft, when we consider that the means of acquiring philosophical facts was limited to a few, that the remainder roamed in the field of imagination, and that the most common phenomena were in the hands of a few crafty and ambitious men, the means of enabling them the more easily to saddle the multitude and to ride on their backs. One or two common predictions fulfilled were sufficient to establish the reputation of a man for ever, and entitle him to be revered as one worthy to receive and communicate the divine will. An instance of this is recorded, and believe me, " 'tis true as holy writ," in 1st Kings, 18th : after a long draught, to which Africa and Asia are very subject, the astrologer Elijah ascended Mount Carmel, pretending to pray, but really to watch the clouds; and when he at last saw the black speck he descended, and with certainty predicted the torrents of rain which followed : you know the use he made of this, while, in reality, his knowledge was no more than that possessed by every seaman, particularly by those who are in the habit of doubling the Cape of Good Hope, as the cloud emphatically called the ox eye, is the never failing harbinger of very heavy rains; and even men in this country engaged in the common occupations of life, particularly farmers, when they perceive a small black cloud in the northwest, view it as the sign of an approaching thunder storm. Another instance will be found in the same chapter, for the success of which, (if there be any truth at all in the account,) the astrologer Elijah was probably indebted to the then unknown properties of lime. Few perhaps were aware in those days, that burnt limestone retains so much caloric, (or heat from the fire,) that when water is thrown on it, it disengages its caloric so rapidly as to produce combustion, if any wood or other combustible is in contact with it: their ignorance of this quality was no doubt owing to their using a mineral tar or pitch, somewhat similar to that which issues from stone coal when burning, as a cement for bricks and stone and a variety of other purposes, where we use lime. The astrologer Elijah, however, discovered or heard of this property, and turned it to his own advantage. He procured twelve prepared limestone, and with these built his altar; then placed his wood and sacrifice; the water disengaged the caloric, which fired the wood, and the sacrifice was consumed. The trick of this hoary headed monster (I beg pardon, *this man after God's own heart*) having succeeded, and knowing that his success was entirely owing to his art, he commanded the astonished multitude to seize his four hundred and fifty fellow astrologers whom

he had kept in ignorance of his discovery, to take them to the brook Kishon, and there in cold blood to murder them; and not to suffer one to escape !!! In all its varied forms has the knowledge of natural philosophy been made subservient to an ambitious priesthood, who alone had the time and opportunity of studying it to any advantage, until the glorious discovery of printing; then it was this giant power of priestly despotism fled the gloomy prisons of a cloister and took its seat among the civilized nations of the earth.

It is to the press, so far as it is free from priestly influence, that mankind are indebted for the knowledge which they possess of Nature and her laws; and, no longer compelled to wander in the waste of our imaginations, we fearlessly and successfully trace every effect to its respective cause: and such predictions and tricks, which were once considered prophecies and miracles, would now, by the increasing study of natural philosophy, merit the contempt of our meanest sailor, and still more ignorant hodmen. If, then, the writings on which the Christian system is founded be based on fraud and error, what can we expect of the superstructure?

Among the pious frauds which tottering error calls to support its drooping head, is using the names of intelligent men to sanction its superstitions. A tract fell into my hands the other day, which no doubt was distributed among us from the most benevolent, but mistaken, motives, hoping perchance to snatch out of this large assembly at least one brand, and save it from an eternal roasting in our heavenly father's kindly provided hell. This tract gives, as a quotation, from the celebrated lord Bacon, that "a little philosophy will make a man an atheist, but a great deal will make him a Christian." This is a gross misrepresentation, and I cannot but pity the men who, to support a bad cause, are compelled to resort to wilful misrepresentation and notorious falsehood. Lord Bacon says, that "a little philosophy inclineth men's minds to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion;" and he also says, that "It were better to have no opinion of God at all, than such an opinion as is unworthy of him; for the one is unbelief, the other is contumely; and certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose: surely, says he, I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat his children as soon as they were born. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation; all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not: but superstition dismounts all these, and erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men: therefore atheism did never perturb states; for it makes men wary of themselves, as looking no further; and we see the times which inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Cæsar) were civil times: but superstition hath been the confusion of many states, and bringeth in a new principle of motion, that ravisheth all the spheres of government. The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools, and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order." Would you not like to know the reason our soul saving friend did not embody all Bacon said on atheism in his tract? Well,

I'll tell you : it would not suit his purpose ; and what he did select, his accustomed pen must needs misrepresent. With lord Bacon, I readily admit that depth in natural philosophy leadeth men's minds to religion ; i. e. to natural religion ; and hence the mythology of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, and other nations. The sun, as the source of life and heat ; wind, from a similarity to blowing the breath ; thunder and lightning, from a slight analogy to sounds produced by men—were personified, and, aided by the fertility of men's imaginations, became objects of worship and of fear ; and many of these superstitions are perpetuated even among us by ignorant, yet very pious, mothers and nurses. It was but the other day a child asked its nurse, during a thunder storm, what made that noise : the nurse replied that it was God Almighty moving his furniture ; but, said the child, our furniture does not make such a noise : Oh no, said the nurse, but his furniture is so much larger than ours. But natural philosophy teaches us, who are freed from the shackles of superstition, that these are unconscious agents of good and ill, and therefore neither merit our respect, nor awaken our fears ; but 'tis far otherwise with those who are yet under the dominion of the priests, whose interest being to retain their influence over the human mind, spare no pains to impress their hearers that it is heresy to believe any thing contrary to the letter of their Bible. Hence every child found walking in the street is hurried to a Sunday school to have his mind polluted with folly and fanaticism, and hence the Sunday school premiums to *buy* the little ragged urchins to the love of the Bible god, and all the calendar of saints, prophets, and apostles ; and hence the missionary societies, Bible societies, mite societies, tract societies, rag bag societies, and a host of other societies, to fleece the pockets of the too credulous Christians, and to further the cause of error, fraud, and deception.

To be continued.

Robert Taylor.—We had been led to believe that this gentleman, after his conviction on a ridiculous charge of *blasphemy*, in the court of King's Bench, London, had been sentenced to two years imprisonment, and a heavy fine. We perceive, however, by London papers to the 7th December, that the defendant was then at large. He had attended several days in the court to receive judgment ; but was at last told by the judge before whom the cause was tried, "that he would not be called up at present, but that his recognizances would remain in force in case the *prosecutors* should determine to move for the judgment of the court."

We know well from experience who are the "prosecutors" here alluded to. They are the *priesthood*, who have instigated all the prosecutions against liberal principles, and who, if public opinion was not against them in England, would react the same bloody tragedies which their ghostly predecessors had exhibited in Smithfield. Nor is it from *lenity* they have not called for judgment on Mr. Taylor, but because they know that prosecutions of the nature instituted against him have become highly unpopular ; and popularity is what the clergy, above all other men, are the most desirous of obtaining. They have also evidently calculated, in the present instance, that by holding the defendant to bail, this will re-

strain him from repeating the supposed offence. This may be good policy on their part; but, if we have formed a correct estimate of the character of Mr. Taylor, we are inclined to think he will not be induced to abandon his purpose by this priestly manoeuvre. At all events, nothing, even in *terrorum*, though sanctioned by a conclave of all the priests of all the religions in the universe, can arrest the progress of liberal principles. The truth, like a mighty torrent, is advancing with an impetus which nothing can restrain until superstition is effectually prostrated.

Mr. Owen.—It is already known by the public papers, that Mr. Robert Owen, contrary to the invidious prognostications of the superstitionists, has arrived in the United States, and was delivering lectures on the Social System, in the American Theatre, New Orleans, in the end of last month. Previous to the lectures, Mr. Owen published the following Address, which we lay with pleasure before our readers:

To those who desire to improve the condition of the Population in all Nations upon rational principles.

In what manner shall I address you upon matters entirely new to the public, yet of the highest importance to every human being? My wish is, to benefit you and your posterity to a greater extent than I can yet venture to explain to you. I hope, indeed, to assist you to remove ultimately all the evils which men have hitherto endured.

To effect this change, beneficially for the present generation, I must offend against the strongest prejudices of all nations. I must at once openly and most decidedly oppose notions and opinions heretofore deemed by each of them sacred truths, and must set myself in opposition to almost all their present practices. To benefit my fellow men and to secure to them the most lasting services, it is unavoidable that I must for a time arouse against me the popular prejudices of all people. It will be however greatly for the benefit of every individual, in all countries, that these feelings should now be called forth, that the errors which produce them may be made manifest, overcome, and removed.

I would avoid this course and not create this temporary excitement if I could, and yet effect the object. I would greatly prefer during the whole of my life to reciprocate kindness with all my fellow men, rather than to imitate their feelings by opposing their old established notions and habits; the one course would produce a life of ease, comfort, and pleasure, while the other is likely to lead to a long contention, and to every thing that can be personally hazardous.

But to decline this task with the impressions which have been made almost from childhood on my mind, I feel would be a dereliction of the highest duty which any individual has ever yet had to perform. I commence it, therefore, and whatever I may say or do, in the performance of this great work, I now once for all simply state, that my intention is to benefit my fellow men without any other motive than the discharge of a duty which appears to me beyond all comparison paramount to every other consideration.

I have been prepared for this task by an early study of human nature, under all the various circumstances in which it has yet existed according

to the history of all nations; by personal intercourse with the leading minds of modern times, and by long continued varied and extensive practical experiments in some of the most civilized countries in both hemispheres. I have prepared a course of lectures by which to make the result of these proceedings known to the world. These lectures I intend to deliver in the chief cities and towns in the United States, and in Great Britain and Ireland, that the principles which they advocate may be generally known, severely scrutinized, and fairly discussed, in order that, if they shall be found true, they may be adopted, in practice, without delay, thus giving to those who now live some of their benefits; or if they should not be found to be in strict accordance with *every fact* which man knows, that they may be thus proved, and in the most public manner acknowledged to be an error. This will be at once to do justice to the principles and to mankind. For if they are as beneficial as to me they appear to be, the good which they will effect will soon commence; while if there be evil in them, that evil will be as speedily brought to a termination.

It may be proper here to state my conviction that man was born ignorant of his nature: that he has continued in ignorance of it, and that he has erred in all his conduct. That he has continually acted in opposition to the fixed laws of his nature, and thereby created evil. That he has been incompetent to distinguish vice from virtue and to discover the causes which produce both. That in consequence of this ignorance, every kind of confusion has been introduced into human society, until it has become so complex, contradictory, and irrational that it can no longer proceed without "something being done," to remedy its daily increasing evils, or in other words, without an entire reorganization over the world, founded on a correct knowledge of our nature and of its fixed laws, which laws can alone determine real virtue and vice.

I propose then that the governments, and the most enlightened, scientific and practical men of all countries, shall be invited to put an end forever to war and to all individual and national rivalry, and to reorganize society in every country, upon the principle for forming arrangements in strict accordance with our nature.

It will be discovered that those arrangements may now be so formed, that, most advantageously for all, every human being may, not only without contest of any kind, but in harmony with all the best feelings of our nature, be secured in the possession, at all times, of a full supply of the best of every thing the earth can afford. To prove the truth of these statements and to effect these important results is the object of the lectures which I propose to deliver.

I have already expended more than five hundred thousand dollars and devoted upwards of forty years in making preparations for this great work. The task is now to be accomplished: if I succeed, the benefit will be for all mankind to the latest posterity; if I fail, the loss is to be mine.

I do not, however, state this expenditure of time and money with a view to claim the slightest degree of merit of any description; on the contrary, I am as much convinced as I can be of any truth, that I am not, for any thing I have done, or may do, entitled to any merit what-

ever; for I am well assured that if the magnitude and importance of the object had appeared to others as they do to me, there is not a human being who would not willingly and with pleasure make similar, or, if they had the means, much greater, sacrifices.

I have now but one request to make to the population of all countries: it is that they will endeavor to attend to this subject with a sincere desire to discover truth from error, discuss every part of it with kind feelings, and after a calm and patient investigation of *all* its principles and their practical results, that they will openly and fairly avow their opinions upon the subject.

New Orleans, Jan. 13, 1828.

ROBERT OWEN.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Fiery Ordeal.—The power of resisting the action of heat has been claimed or possessed by individuals in all ages. At first it was supposed to be miraculous, and owing to the immediate interposition of the Deity. It has even been admitted, in courts of justice, as a conclusive proof of guilt on some occasions, and of innocence or superior sanctity in others. An exceedingly minute and interesting account of the fire ordeal of the Hindoos was given in the *Asiatic Researches* by the celebrated governor Hastings; and in the *Antigone* of Sophocles, the guards accused of neglect by Creon, to prove their innocence, offered to handle hot iron or walk through fire. Virgil tells us, that the priests of Apollo, who attended the temple on Mount Soracte, had the faculty of walking with naked feet over burning coals, and Varro affirms, that they were rendered insusceptible of the effects of fire only by means of a composition. The priests of the temple of the goddess Feronia were not less dexterous; and Strabo says that this drew every year a great number of curious people to visit and enrich the temple. The city of Thyane had a temple dedicated to Diana Persica, whose priestesses could also tread with impunity on the hottest coals. In more modern times, Spain had its *Saludadores* or *Santiguadores*, who were nothing but impostors, pretending that they were descended from St. Catherine. To prove their illustrious origin, they showed on their body the impression of a wheel, called themselves incombustible, and managed fire with great address. Leonard Vair reports, that one of them having been in good earnest shut up in too hot an oven, was found burnt to a cinder when it was opened.

The trial by fiery ordeal, which, for a long time, the criminal jurisprudence of Europe tolerated, to those who did not carry arms as a mode of appealing to God, was performed in various ways. The first, which was used by the nobles, priests, and other free persons, was the trial by red hot iron. It consisted in carrying a bar of iron about three pounds in weight, heated to a greater or less degree, according to the nature of the accusation, and to a greater or less distance, according to the sentence; or in putting the hand into a red hot gauntlet, or in walking over hot iron bars or ploughshares, from nine to twelve in number.

The earliest instance of fire ordeal in Christendom occurred in the fourth century. Simplicius, bishop of Autun, had married before his

promotion, and his wife, unwilling to quit him after his promotion, continued to live with him. The sanctity of Simplicius suffered by the constancy of his wife's affection, and it was rumoured that the bishop persisted in opposition to the ecclesiastical canons to taste of the sweets of matrimony; upon which his wife, in the presence of a great concourse of people, took up a considerable quantity of burning coals, which she held in her clothes, and applied to her breasts, without the least hurt to her person or her garments, as the legend says, and her example being followed by her husband, with the like success, the multitude admired the miracle, and proclaimed the innocence of the loving pair. A similar trick, as Mosheim terms it, was played by St. Brice in the fifth century.

The empress Maria of Arragon, wife of Otho III., had accused a young Italian count of having endeavored to seduce her, and he was put to death; but his widow, with the head of her husband in her hand, demanded to be admitted to the fiery ordeal in order to prove his innocence, and holding, as long as was thought necessary, a red hot bar of iron without being burnt, this miracle was admitted as proof, and the empress was condemned to be burnt alive.

Another form of trial, attended with greater ceremony, was that undergone by Luitprand, a Milanese priest, who, in 1103, offered to prove the truth of an accusation against his bishop, by walking through a blazing pile of wood. He entered, it is said, through volumes of flame, which divided before him, and came out amid the acclamations of the people. It was remarked, however, that his hand had received some injury from the fire when throwing holy water and incense into the pile, and that his foot was bruised. However, this proof was thought insufficient by the pope, who acquitted the archbishop. In truth, says Duclos, who has inserted an able essay on Trial by Duel and the Elements, in the fifteenth volume of the *Memoirs of the Academie Royale des Inscriptions*, if we consider the whole story, diminish the size and brightness of the pile, and increase the injury done to the hand and foot, and regard the sentence of the pope as directed against a fanatic, the wonder of this pretended miracle will cease. Aldobrandini, a Florentine monk, in the eleventh century, also walked through the fire, to prove an accusation against his bishop, and hence got the name of *Petrus Igneus*.

In the time of the ridiculous quarrel between the Dominicans and Franciscans, one of the former proposed to prove the sanctity of Jerome Savonarola, by walking through a blazing fire, and a cordelier made the same offer to prove the contrary, but at the sight of the flames they both ran off. George Logothetus also tells us of a man who refused to submit to the fiery ordeal, saying, he was no charlatan, and when the archbishop pressed him, he sagaciously replied, that he would have no objection to take the burning bar, provided he received it from the hands of his eminence. As the minds of men became more enlightened, the miracle of the resistance of fire was disputed, and it was referred either to imposition or natural causes.

Religious Principles of Fot.—He that forsaketh his father and mother, says Fot, to follow me, shall become a perfect Samanean, or heavenly being.

He that keepeth my precepts to the fourth degree of perfection, shall acquire the power of flying in the air, of moving earth and heaven, of protracting or shortening life, and of rising again.

The Samanean looks with contempt on riches, and makes use only of such things as are strictly necessary. He mortifies the flesh, subdues his passions, fixes his desires and affections on nothing terrestrial, meditates without ceasing upon my doctrine, endures injuries with patience, and bears no enmity against his neighbor.

Heaven and earth shall pass away; despise therefore your bodies which are composed of the four perishable elements, and think only of your immortal souls.

Hearken not to the suggestions of the flesh; fear and sorrow are the produce of the passions; stifle the passions, and fear and sorrow will thus be destroyed.

Whosoever dies without having received my doctrine, becomes again and again an inhabitant of the earth, till he shall have embraced it.

Tear.—A crystal drop of water, which at once involuntarily starts in the eye of the philosopher, upon the bare mention of the word king, or priest! I declare to God, I almost wish that I possessed the gloomy eloquence of Hegestpous, that mankind, by that sad alternative, might be forever relieved from those scourges of the human race!—*Pigott.*

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered, in the Temple of Arts, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 17th instant, at 11 o'clock forenoon. The *theological* lectures will be continued in the afternoon, at half past 2 o'clock.

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George H. Evans, Printer, 264 Greenwich street.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 5.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 23, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

In the first place, let it be ascertained what the soul is ; and, in the next place, consider whether it is immortal ?

What in the component parts of man can the soul be ? Is it the corporal system, or any part thereof ? Certainly not ; for this begins to decay before the life leaves the body, and finally incorporates with the earth from whence it originated. Is it the life of the body ? If it is, is it any more immortal than steam, wind, or water, which by their action on machinery keep it in motion as long as the machinery is in order, and either of these powers applied ? Shall we say that life is immortal, because while acting on the human system it keeps it in motion ? Or because when it ceases to act we cannot identify it or determine its destination ? Or is it immortal because we wish it to be so from the love we have of life ? All this proves nothing to the point. But may it not be fairly presumed that the life of vegetables and animals is equally immortal, and as easily proved to be so as the life of man ? That man is endowed with the greatest power of reasoning, only proves his organization better adapted to that end than that of the inferior animals. Not only so : may we not with the wise man conclude, that man has no pre-eminence over a beast, as to any superior claim to immortality ? Every thing appertaining to man proves him superior in rank in creation ; which proves his station higher here, but not hereafter.

Next, as to the *usefulness* of the doctrine of man's original immortality. What I mean is, that he has originally, not only an elementary but a divine life ; that is, a life from God by divine inspiration for the government of his temporal life, and this is to be rewarded or punished in a future state, according as it has acted its part in the government of this elementary life. This doctrine, so far from being useful, cannot, in the nature of things, be true ; because if this life is the life of God in the soul, it, according to the nature of things, *must act the part of God's* consequently admit of no impropriety or sin, nor be subject to misery nor death. That this is not the case, is admitted on all hands.

Another view of the subject is this : the divine is given for the redemption of the mortal life of the soul ; that is, by obedience on the part of the mortal life to the divine life, it partakes of, and is leavened into its nature, and for this end is the probationary state of man. There would seem to be some plausibility, and even truth, in this doctrine, were it not for the existence of facts which throw future accountability and rewards and punishments, and probation for future inheritance, out of the

question. And they are these : man, in the operations of Nature, equally with other animals, falls into destruction without any regard to his probationary destination in every grade, station, and age of his life, from the stillborn infant to the most protracted life. However, by a supernatural something, man may seem to be governed, yet we see that which is perishable is not any the less so by his obedience. The temporal part in the righteous is as sure to perish as that of the vicious, which mollifies the doctrine of immortal inheritance.

The doctrine is moreover inapplicable to an omnipotent, all wise being. If in the creation of man his eternal and happy inheritance was the object, it would prove abortive to rest it either on his (man's) obedience or choice, because of man's inconstancy. Deity would prove himself short sighted in his plan, and inefficient in the execution, to arrange it in any way that it should possibly be abortive. If he is all wise, all powerful, and just, salvation must be *certain* to all ; man's notion to the contrary notwithstanding. And if this is not the design, man's speculations on the subject cannot alter it. True, gain can be made out of this doctrine, to some ; oppression and loss of life to others, and destruction to all : which has ever been and ever will be its fruits, and for this reason it ought to be abandoned by all. But the doctrine of certainty is this, to do the best we can every day, without any reference to uncertainties. There is a right and wrong in human actions : those actions which are known to produce love and peace pursue, and avoid the rest. Then down would drop priestcraft as a noisome pest.

IMPARTIALIST.

Dutchess County, February, 3, 1828.

REASONS FOR NOT BEING A CHRISTIAN.

(IN A LETTER TO A FRIEND.)

" TRUTH has been my only aim, and wherever that has appeared to lead, my thoughts have impartially followed, without minding whether the footsteps of any other lay the same way ; not that I want a due respect to other men's opinions, but after all, the greatest reverence is due to truth.

LOCKE.

MY FRIEND—You ask me *why* I have quitted the religion of my forefathers, *why* I am not content to believe what is believed in by nine tenths of my neighbors. I am ever ready to give reasons for my conduct ; and as you seem to put these questions in good earnest, I will as earnestly answer you. I am not a Christian, because, after having studied and examined the subject to the best of my ability, I come to the conclusion that Christianity is no better than an old woman's fable. Thus you have my reasons in a few words ; but I will state them more at length, in the hope that if in error I may be corrected, if in the right that I may correct you.

The first doubts I had of the truth of Christianity originated with reading the Bible, at an early period of my life, and long before I had read the doubts of others. I was not formed to put implicit faith in any dogma or creed ; I was naturally of an inquisitive turn of mind, and a thing of so much importance as religion could not long remain unnoticed. The Bible cosmogony, or account of the creation, given in the first part of Genesis, was the first thing which took my attention. Have you read this account, my friend, since you left school ? Have you ever sat

down to read it with the view of ascertaining whether it were deserving of your belief? You have read it, doubtless; but I question if you ever read it with the above view. Do, then, some day when you are in a reasoning mood, set about it, and if your conclusion should differ from mine, tell me *why*. If you think fit you can begin with a prayer for grace to understand *the Word*; but I would have you proceed with a view of judging whether the cosmogony of the Bible be consistent in itself, or agreeable with natural facts. The priests tell us, that the Bible has God for its author, and salvation for its end; and if so, we should expect it to be perfect in its construction, and free from the possibility of failing of the end proposed; but I deny that the Bible has either of these characteristics, and if you will examine candidly I have no doubt but that you will be of the same opinion. I call your attention to the cosmogony, because it was the first thing which awakened my suspicions, and I think, naturally enough, that it will have the same effect on you if you examine with the same view.

I do not pretend to a perfect knowledge of the Bible, for my study of it has been but very limited; I have read enough of it to convince me that it is *not a divine revelation*, and to study it further I should consider as no better than a waste of time. I know the general contents of the Bible, but I cannot quote it like a methodist, nor comment upon it like a *Paine*. Nevertheless, I know enough of it to answer my purpose in argument, and that you shall find if you should be inclined to enter into a controversy on the subject.

My first doubts, as I have before said, originated with the imperfections of the Bible; but after having been a thinker on the subject for several years, I find these to be the weakest of my reasons for disbelief. It was from a study of Nature, and by contrasting our knowledge of things with the spiritual stories of priests, ancient and modern, that I obtained a firm conviction of the falsehood of all religious dogmas. From the moment that I began to doubt I had no settled opinion till I became convinced of the nonexistence of supernaturals. I am not inclined to believe any thing on the mere word of another; or, at least, nothing out of the line of common occurrences; and of all the authors who have written in favor of supernaturals, not one that I have read produces any thing amounting to proof, and but very little amounting to probability. You may think differently: it may appear to you that the existence of supernaturals is amply proved; if so, do point out to me what you consider as a proof, and if I cannot detect its fallacy, I will acknowledge that you have reason on your side.

Any one convinced of the nonexistence of supernaturals cannot possibly believe any religious doctrines, for this conviction includes a disbelief of all spiritual things; but another, who believes in the existence of powers superior to Nature, may still disbelieve the Christian doctrines; and of this description there are a great many who rank under the denomination of deists. A man of the latter description disbelieves the Bible because it appears inconsistent, and unlike what might be expected from an omnipotent deity; the other does not believe that there is a deity to give a revelation; and, therefore, even if the Bible were a work consistent in itself, he could not believe it. For my part, I know no-

thing of spiritual things ; nor does their existence appear either probable or possible.

I may as well recount to you an incident which went a great way towards leading me to my present antispiritual notions. Shortly after I began to think a little on religious subjects, but before I had read any of our argumentative infidel authors, I paid a visit to an old kinsman, a farmer, who lived in a village near my parental home. I went to church with the family, as a matter of course in a Sunday visit, and in returning, our conversation turned upon the sermon. Doubtless we made some very learned and judicious comments, much on a par with those made in the church porch by old Amen and his party ; but they are all forgotten save one, and that I shall recollect as long as I have recollection. The conversation was principally kept up by the young folks of the party ; but after a pause my aged kinsman says, " The parson tells us that *all* things must have had a beginning, and that as nothing could create itself, God must have created all things ; but if all things must have had a beginning, God must have had a beginning. Who, then, created God ? " What internal process of reasoning gave birth to this logic, I know not : nor do I know what were or are the opinions of its author, farther than I can judge from this specimen of doubting ; but this I know, that with me it gave birth to a train of reasoning which made me a rational man. I might have studied Bible inconsistencies for years, and still have believed the fundamentals of Christianity ; but this bold thought set me upon a new way of thinking, and the minor matters, concerning where Cain got his wives, and so on, sunk into insignificance.

You think that I have not given sufficient reasons for my disbelief of the generally received doctrines. You say that the apparent inconsistencies of the Bible do not warrant our discarding the great truths of Christianity. Well, let us see what are those great truths. What is Christianity ?

As the *first* great truth I suppose we must place the fall of man in paradise, and hence the original sin of mankind ; as the *second*, the salvation of the world through Jesus Christ. Are not these the two leading features of Christianity ? Can you prove them to be truths ? Can you make them appear to be probabilities ? Just read the story of Adam and Eve and the serpent. A god,—described as the creator of millions of worlds, and possessing every attribute in perfection, power, wisdom, justice, goodness and mercy,—is said to have made Adam and placed him in a garden, prepared with every desirable thing for his reception. Then this god makes Eve as a partner for Adam : but owing to a shortness of materials, or something of that sort, he does not make Eve out of the dust of the earth as he did other animals, but causes a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and then deprives him of a rib from which Eve is produced. It next appears that God has an enemy who comes to persuade Eve to eat of a certain tree which was forbidden. Eve eats, and persuades her husband to eat, of the forbidden fruit : God is offended, and condemns mankind to death and torments in hell, the territory of his enemy. This is one of your *great truths*. Now for another.

At length God repented of the hard sentence he had passed on our unfortunate race ; but then before he could be *merciful* his *justice* must be

appeared. The sacrifice of a mortal, or of hundreds of mortals, would not; it seems, have been sufficient as an atonement for the heinous offence of eating an apple; but a god must die: the anger of our great Creator and very merciful protector could not be appeased without the death of his son. When this plan for our salvation was formed, it does not appear that this son was begotten; but God sent his friend the Holy Ghost to the Virgin Mary in order to do the business of begetting by proxy; not a very legitimate way, you will allow, according to our present notions of such affairs. Be this as it may, Mary was filled with the Holy Ghost, or filled sufficiently for the purpose, and produced the proxy begotten son of God. We read that for thirty years this young god labored as a carpenter; that at the end of this time he commenced preaching, and eventually he was executed, in order to appease the wrath of his father, and thus prevent the otherwise inevitable damnation of the human race. These are the leading features of the great and fundamental doctrine of Christianity. Pause over them for a moment; consider the end proposed; the being supposed to be the principal actor, and the means adopted; and then tell me whether to adopt such a creed be not to dishonor God more than to reject it. Could I believe in a deity, I certainly could never be led to believe such absurdities of him: I would have a rational god or none. I merely ask you to reason on the subject, and I am well convinced that no arguments of mine will be wanting. In fact, I have not patience to argue on such points, for they appear so absurd in themselves as not to require argument. Do as I have done: use your reasoning faculties; cast off early prejudices, and judge of Christianity as you would of the creed of Mahomet; and I doubt not but that your opinions will be something similar to mine.

You seem to think it surprising, that if the doctrines of Christianity be so absurd as infidel writers would make them appear, that they should have the credence of so large a portion of mankind; but if you will study the nature of this belief as held by the circle of your acquaintance, and how they first acquired it, I think that this surprise will wear away. Why do the greater part of our countrymen believe in three gods in one, and the death of one of them to appease the anger of a second? You have the answer in another question. Why do the Turks cry, *There is but one God and Mahomet is his prophet*? The universality of belief given to any doctrine does not prove its correctness. Just call to mind the old notions of the planetary systems; the earth a fixture, with the sun, planets, and stars revolving round it.

This past for certain, undisputed;
It ne'er cam i' their heads to doubt it,
Till chiefs gat up an' wad confute it,
An' ca'd it wrang;
An' muckle din there was about it
Baith loud and lang."

And "muckle din," as my favorite poet says, there will be in destroying any other erroneous notion which has been sanctified by time; and more especially when, like the Christian religion, it is backed by interest and prejudices; the interest of the priests and the prejudices of the unthinking multitude.

I again repeat, study the nature of the belief in Christianity as held by the generality of mankind: ask each of your circle of acquaintance *his reasons* for being a Christian, and you will find but few who really understand what Christianity is, much less be able to give reasons for their belief. The fact is, they go to church and read their Bible for the same reason that they speak the English language: they have been brought up to it; they have been taught so to do, and they think themselves right, because their neighbors do the same. If you can believe *such* a universality of belief any credit to the holders, or any warranty to others, you must differ widely from me in your notions of truth, or of the evidence necessary to command our acquiescence: I would rather be single in my opinions than have a multitude of such supporters.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 54.

Of the Prophets.—Prophet, Nabim, Roheim—speaking, seeing, guessing, is all the same thing. All ancient authors agree that the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, and all the Asiatic nations had their prophets and conjurers. These nations were long anterior to the little people called the Jews, which, when it formed a horde in a corner of land, had no language but that of its neighbors, and which, as we have before shown, borrowed from the Phœnicians even the names of its God, Eloha, Jehovah, Adonai, Sadai; which, in short, took all its rites and ceremonies from its surrounding neighbors, though it continually declaimed against them.

It was said by some writer, that the first seer, or prophet, was the first knave that met with a simpleton. Thus is prophecy established from the most remote antiquity. But to fraud, let us add fanaticism; these two monsters dwell together very peaceably in human skulls. We have witnessed the arrival in London of hordes from the heart of Languedoc and Vivarais, who were as much prophets as those of the Jews, and joined the most horrible enthusiasm to the most disgusting falsehoods. We have witnessed Jurieu prophesying in Holland. There were always such impostors, and not only wretches who predicted, but other wretches who imagined prophecies spoken by ancient personages.

The world has been filled with Sibyls and Nostradamuses. The Alcoran reckons two hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets. Bishop Epiphanius, in his notes on the pretended Canon of the Apostles, reckons seventy-three Jewish prophets, and ten prophetesses. The trade of prophet among the Jews was neither a dignity nor a degree, nor a profession in the state; they were not admitted prophets as doctors are admitted at Oxford and Cambridge. Let those prophesy that would; it was sufficient to have, or to believe they had, or to feign they had, the calling of the spirit of God. Futurity was announced by dancing and playing on the psaltery. Saul, although he was rebuked, took it into his head to be a prophet. During civil wars each party had its prophet, as we have our Grub street writers. The parties treated each other reciprocally as fools, visionaries, liars, and knaves; and in this alone they spoke truth. "The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad," says Hosea, chap. ix. ver. 7.

The prophets of Jerusalem are fanciful and deceitful men, said Saphoniah, a Jerusalem prophet. They are all something like our apothecary, Moore, who inserts in the newspapers, "Take my pills and beware of counterfeits." When the prophet Micaiah is predicting misfortunes to the kings of Samaria and Judah, the prophet Zedekiah gives him a box on the cheek, saying, "Which way went the spirit of the Lord from me to speak unto thee?" (2 Chron. xviii. 23.) Jeremiah, who prophesied in favor of Nebuchadnezzar, a Jewish tyrant, put cords round his neck, and a yoke on his back, which was a type, and he was to send this type to the neighboring petty kings to invite them to submission to Nebuchadnezzar. The prophet Ananias, who looked upon Jeremiah as a traitor, took his cords from him, and threw his yoke on the ground.

We have Hosea, whom God orders to take a whore, and to beget sons of a whore: "Go take unto thee a wife of whoredoms, and children of whoredoms." (Hosea i. 2.) Hosea punctually obeys; he takes Gomer, daughter of Diblaim, who brings him three children. Thus this prophecy, and this whoredom, lasted at least three years. But this would not satisfy the Jewish god, who orders Hosea to sleep with a woman that had already cuckolded her husband. This cost the prophet no more than fifteen pieces of silver, and a bushel and a half of barley, which is purchasing adultery at a cheap rate. (Hosea iii. 2.) It cost the patriarch Judah still less, in his incest with his daughter in law, Tamar. (Gen. xxxviii. 18.)

We have Ezekiel, who after having slept three hundred and ninety days on his left side, and forty on his right side; after having swallowed a roll of parchment, and eaten a *sir reverend* on his bread, by the express command of God, introduces God himself, the Creator of the Universe, who speaks thus to young Aholibah: "Thou hast increased and waxed great; thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness." (Ezek. xvi. 7, 8.) "But thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way, and hast opened thy feet (or thighs) to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms." Ibid, 25. "Her sister Aholibah was more corrupt in her inordinate love than she—for she doated upon her paramours, whose flesh is like the flesh of asses, and whose issue is like the issue of horses." (Ch. xxiii. 11, 20.) When general Withers heard these prophecies read to him, he asked in what brothel the *holy* scriptures had been written?

Prophecies are seldom read; it is difficult to go through these lengthy and enormous rhapsodies. Fashionable men, who have read Gulliver and Atlantis, know neither Hosea nor Ezekiel. When we point out to sensible people these execrable passages, buried in the rubbish of prophecy, they cannot recover from their astonishment. They cannot conceive, that an Isaiah, (Isaiah xx. 3,) should walk stark naked in the middle Jerusalem; that an Ezekiel should cut his beard into three portions; a Jonah should be three days in a whale's belly, &c. Were they to these shameless indecencies in a profane book, they would throw it in disgust. It is the Bible; they remain confounded; they hesitate to condemn the abominations, and dare not condemn the book that them. It requires time, before they dare to make use of comr but, in the end, they detest what knaves and simpletons b them to adore.

When were these irrational and immodest books written? Nobody knows. The most probable opinion is that the greater part of the books attributed to Solomon, Daniel, and others, were written in Alexandria; but what matters it as to time and place? Is it not sufficient to witness in them the most outrageous folly, and the most infamous debauchery? How is it, then, that the Jews have held them in veneration? Because they were Jews. We must likewise consider, that all these extravagant monuments were preserved only by priests and scribes. We know how scarce books were in all countreis, where the art of printing (which the Chinese invented) reached us so late. We shall be still more astonished when we see fathers of the church adopt these disgusting reveries, or allege them in support of their sects.

We come, at length, from the old covenant to the new one. Let us proceed to Jesus, and the establishment of Christianity.

To be continued.

INFLUENCE OF FANATICISM.

Mr. Editor—I give you an extract from a letter received a few days ago from a friend in Albany, which contains his reasons, as well, I believe, as that of many other liberal minded persons, for not supporting the dissemination of liberal principles by subscribing to the *Correspondent*. I do not attach any blame to those who evince this apparent lukewarmness in the cause of mental emancipation; for it is scarcely credible, to those who have not experienced it, into what dilemmas the expression of even doubts in religious matters, much more of an entire rejection of all religions, will involve a free thinker in some sections of this free country. I have only to hope that the day is not far distant when the right to express any opinion shall not only be possessed but exercised.

“I would subscribe for the *Correspondent*—I think it almost a duty—but I find that it would continually get me into disputations with those around me in defending its principles, as the people here, though not the most moral of the human race, are very religious; and the term *deist* they are taught to believe signifies all that is despicable in the human character. However, even here a considerable number are to be found who have laid aside the mummery of priests, and prefer trusting their own reason, to the incomprehensible mysteries of the church. It is with pleasure that I find the doctrine of unitarianism fast gaining ground; a doctrine, though not exactly the same as deism, as far as I can understand, comes so very nigh it that it must finally be one and the same. The *Anti-dote* makes no noise, and even here is considered a poor slavish affair.”

PROVIDENCE.

Mr. Editor—If we consider, for a moment, how the inferior animals are used by man, we should be almost persuaded that they are considered by him to be void of feeling or mere insensate machines. Some classes he works in the most unmerciful manner with little food or rest, such as the horse and the ass; other classes he causes to be put to death in some slow and torturing manner, that they may be more agreeable to

his pampered palate. Some are hunted down with the greatest avidity, not for the exquisite pleasure that they yield him as food, nor the profit that arises from their sale, but solely to gratify the horrible propensity of hunting them to death. There are likewise several other kinds of animals, from which man is obliged at all times to guard himself, such as lions, bears, tigers, voracious fishes, &c. Others, again, attack his property, and would very soon destroy it, if he were not to destroy them. Those that are dangerous to him, or injurious to his property, even when killed, are seldom of any use for his subsistence. He is, in general, under the necessity of killing the most timorous and innocent creatures for his food, and indeed animals of all kind seem to be harassed in proportion to their timidity. Let us reflect, for a moment, on the condition of the innocent lamb, lying bound before the butcher, turning up its eyes imploring for mercy from the unfeeling man who has already lifted the knife to cut his throat. Does this innocent, this harmless, this inoffensive creature merit such a cruel death? It is certainly very curious that man should be so constituted as to incline him to devour the innocent and timid animals that would never harm him, while he scarcely thinks of making food of those that are so troublesome and dangerous, though many of them are his determined enemies and never lose an opportunity of annoying or destroying him. Thus we may see, that Providence, which is said to regulate all things, has placed a heterogeneous disposition betwixt man and the inferior animals, though in many respects they are homogeneous in their natures. There are some classes of these animals that man is anxious to obtain, as they form a principal part of his food, and there are others which he lashes into his obedience and drudgery; and others, again, that are enemies to him as well as to those more timid animals that he enslaves or destroys.

It must be obvious to every person, that all animals, from the smallest insect that we are acquainted with, to man, the noblest animal, are divided into genus, and these genus are again divided into species, tho' they are all linked together by a regular gradation. The highest of one species being just a degree lower than the lowest of the next species, and thus is formed the grand chain of animated beings; but it is to be deplored that a very great number of these animals are entirely supported by killing and eating those of different species. Not to go into microscopic observations, I shall only mention a few things that are plain to the common observer. I may be allowed to take notice of the spider who plans out and makes his web, and places himself in such a situation that the most delicate touch upon the slight texture of his fabric is immediately communicated to him by its slender threads. He is then upon the look out, and if the concussion is occasioned by some unlucky victim caught in his net, he immediately seizes and devours it; but if he is alarmed by a shock from a hostile invader that he is unable to combat, he immediately runs off to some secure and hidden retreat. By carrying our observations a little farther, we shall find several birds, particularly swallows, as anxious to catch these cunning spiders as the latter are to catch flies. We may likewise observe the very smallest birds rapaciously devouring insects and worms; these birds are again destroyed by others more powerful but equally carnivorous; and thus the system of carnage is carried on from

the smallest to the largest animals. Thus we may see that the animal world is little else than a scene of ill temper, havoc, and rapine, carnage and devastation. But there are some species of herbivorous, or graminivorous, animals that have no inclination whatever for animal food; yet those innocent and harmless creatures are butchered and destroyed by the carnivorous animals of every description. But if this Providence, that we are told regulates all sublunary affairs, were to consider innocence as a good quality, certainly those harmless creatures would be protected from the harassing ravage and destruction of more vicious animals. But it is plain that Providence never interferes to protect innocence, or to prevent mischief, either amongst the inferior animals or mankind. The more we examine into the animal world, the more we shall be convinced that every different species and individual is regulated by its own particular interest, without reference to the advantage of any other species or individual, and not by any interference of Providence. We may also observe, that there are various species of animals, which are formed by Nature solely for the purpose of destroying others. Their claws, their mouths, their teeth, are exactly calculated for devouring; and their stomachs are so constituted that animal food is their only nourishment, and they would linger and die without it. Now if God, or Providence, had intended any thing like peace and harmony to exist on the world, he would have so constituted animals of all kinds, that they should feed on roots, vegetables, fruits, fungus, and other inanimate substances, which could have been made to grow from the earth in sufficient abundance and variety for every description of animals. And the system of procreation might also have been so regulated that there never should have been too many nor too few animals on the world at one time; and then no one animal, nor species, nor the genus of animals would have been natural enemies to one another; but, the face of the earth would then have exhibited a busy scene of various animals, all living in perfect happiness.

The belief in a Providence is not consistent with the general laws of Nature, and those who profess to believe it act as if they believed it not. Such an absurd doctrine can only be useful to kings and priests and other deceivers of mankind, who use the word Providence to give their transactions an authority that must not be called in question, and under which authority they carry on the most malevolent practices. Thus they screen themselves from public censure, as no person that believes in a regulating Providence will attach any blame to them. But it should be our business to banish from our minds all belief in a Providence; and to behave with prudence and sobriety in all our actions, to use our best endeavors in well-doing, and not allow ourselves to be duped by those who pretend that Providence regulates all the transactions of men in authority, however injurious to individuals or mankind in general: let us therefore persevere with manly endeavor to be useful to ourselves and to our fellow men, trusting nothing to this priest like and imaginary being called Providence.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1828.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

ON NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

By Robert L. Jennings.

Continued from page 59.

But with all the exertions of priests, they will not be able to stop the march of philosophy, whose giant strides are rapidly prostrating the tottering fabric of Christian superstition. For all natural phenomena are daily becoming more and more investigated, and more and more known; and even "those called showers of blood, that historians have enumerated, and which created consternation in the minds of the most intelligent men, and anxiety among whole nations, and in which superstition discovered terrifying omens of battle, misfortunes, and the overthrow of cities and empires"—and this even in the days of lord Bacon, for natural philosophy was but then in its infancy—natural philosophy now teaches us are but the excrements of a butterfly!! In 1608 one of these pretended showers of blood fell in the suburbs of Aix, which without doubt would have transmitted to us a great prodigy, had not M. de Peirsc, the natural philosopher, discovered the cause, in the blood red excrements of butterflies, which at the time were flying in the air. That the rain was colored by the excrements of these insects is evident from this circumstance, that the rain water was red in the suburbs and environs only, where these insects were seen in myriads, and remained in its natural color in the city, where these insects were not; and that those red drops never fell upon the tops of houses, or upon walls more elevated than the height to which butterflies generally rise. The pretended drops of blood, therefore, were nothing but drops of a red liquor deposited by butterflies; which fact is further corroborated by this circumstance, that all these bloody rains, as related by superstitious historians, have happened in the warm seasons of the year, when butterflies are most numerous.

The same ignorance of the principles of natural philosophy, as we find in the Mosaic superstitions, appears in the Christian writings, which the increasing study of natural philosophy must necessarily destroy. I will say nothing of the reputed birth of the supposed founder of Christianity, so contrary to all facts of which we have any knowledge, and agreeing only with the fabulous birth of Esculapius, Hercules, and other god men of the heathen mythology; but will notice his baptism. Matt. 3d, 16th: "And Jesus when he was baptised went up straightway out of the water, and lo the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Now what does philosophy teach us; admitting the very improbable account of the voice, and the appearance of the dove, to be true? That since certain organs are requisite to produce certain sounds called voice, no voice could be produced where those organs were not. Hence those who say these sounds came from God must be materialists, making God like unto ourselves; and as natural philosophy teaches us that some men

possess organs by which they can give to their voice considerable height and distance, if sounds were produced in open space, above the common reach of men's voices, there must have been a ventriloquist among them. And with respect to the dove, since it appeared to none but this god ~~man~~ himself, the first question natural philosophy teaches us to ask is, should his word be taken? Could I believe these stories at all, I should undoubtedly believe that he was himself a ventriloquist; for it appears in 17th Matt. a similar trick was performed when on the top of a *high* mountain with three of his disciples; and not only that, but he was transfigured before them, and Moses and Elias were seen talking with him. Now the first question natural philosophy would teach us to ask here is, how Mr. Peter should know Mr. Moses and Mr. Elias, who had both been dead so many hundreds of years before he was born? And the next question would be, whether Mr. Peter was not so terrified at finding himself so high among the clouds, that he had forgot the appearance of his own person, and that of those who were with him? hence, when he saw them reflected on the surrounding atmosphere greatly enlarged, he concluded they were unnatural beings. The appearance of gigantic figures in the clouds to him might have been a very uncommon and very alarming sight; but natural philosophy teaches us that 'tis no uncommon occurrence in a particular state of the atmosphere, particularly in mountainous countries.

Having ascended the broken mountain in Hungary, says a celebrated traveller, for the thirtieth time, at about a quarter past 4 in the morning, I looked around to see if the atmosphere would permit me to have a free prospect to the south and west, when I observed, at a very great distance, towards the Ach-ter-mann-shohe, a figure of monstrous size! A violent gust of wind having almost carried away my hat, I clapped my hand to it, and with indescribable pleasure observed the colossal figure did the same. Two more colossal figures soon presented themselves, which proved to be the reflected images of the landlord of the inn and another traveller. Of the Souter Fell mountain in Cumberland, in the years 1743, 1744, and 1745, similar appearances, but in greater numbers, were observed by many people, and regularly testified before magistrates then living. They were no doubt reflected images of objects on other parts of the mountain, or on the plains. These phenomena, to the illiterate and superstitious, have been often subjects of alarm; but to the philosopher they are well accounted for upon the principle of refrangibility of the rays of light.

It would seem from the 24th of Matthew that this man Jesus, with all his divine knowledge, was either very ignorant of natural philosophy, or was a great rogue, to play upon the imaginations and fears of his hearers; for he tells them "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." Here we evidently find in this divinity man the vulgar and erroneous opinions concerning an eclipse, and the situation and size of the stars; but what his motive may have been in wishing to terrify his poor, deluded followers, is best known to those to whom he reveals himself. In his death there is nothing uncommon; but his resurrection is a little at variance with every principle of natural philosophy; for, philosophically speaking, by dead we mean, when a body is

in that state from which no power can ever recal it to the former identical animated existence. Hence, admitting his body had remained three days, three weeks, or three months, *apparently* dead, philosophy would compel us to reject the word dead, and to say he was asleep or in a trance during that period. Philosophy knows of no resurrection but which it can demonstrate, and that but of two kinds: first, the taking up of a dead body after being quietly deposited in the ground, to enable physicians with more certainty to prescribe for the living, by their examination of the effects of disease on the bodies of the dead; and the other, the resurrection or rising of all the gaseous portions of our bodies of which it is principally composed, and the resolving of all its constituent parts into their several elements. This last resurrection, as well as the former, can be sufficiently demonstrated, particularly in warm climates, by the effect a putrid carcase produces on our olfactory nerves; but, until the bodies of animals are resolved into their simple elements and made lighter than atmospheric air, natural philosophy admits of no resurrection from the dead, except by the physical force of the living.

But it may be asked, if the study of natural philosophy dispels superstition, and if Christianity be but a superstition, why are those who study it still Christians? There are two reasons: first, early prejudices, which makes many view every thing through a false medium, and prevents them from observing, comparing, and judging correctly; and secondly, *interest*, which prevents *more* from making known what they think: and upon the minds of their illiterate and unreflecting hearers the sophistical arguments of the advocates of Christianity, by operating upon the passions of self love and fear, are well calculated to leave an impression. Believe, and you shall receive a glorious reward, says the priest; you shall be a prince, habited in royal robes, &c.: but if you doubt—you're damned. Thus it is that so few dare to think for themselves, but, like the man's sheep, follow their ram leader until they plunge into the well of implicit faith, from whence the light of reason is for ever excluded. This term, implicit faith, ever reminds me of a gentleman who, meeting a countryman, and desirous of knowing his creed, asked him what he believed. Believe, says the man, why, I believe what the church believes. Then pray, friend, said the other, what does the church believe? Church believe, replied the man, why the church believes—what I believe. The gentleman, no nearer the object of his inquiry, but thinking he would now most certainly get a direct answer, said, Tell me, then, my friend, what you both believe? Both believe—both believe, why, we both believe the same thing. With how many hundreds, even in this city, is this the case; though I cannot suppose it to be so with any present, or they would not have dared to have darkened our doors, lest the floor should have opened and sunk them to eternal perdition. But it *may* be that some stray lamb, from a flock, has ventured to see what pasturage we can afford; not doubting but he can return at his pleasure to his fold, after a little nibbling. To such I would say, he that doubteth is damned to all eternity; and that, too, without benefit of clergy: for if once your mind begins to think for itself, you have passed the bourne of superstition never to return: you may for a time desire, but 'twill not be obtained. The reins of mental government will have passed from your hands, and you will soon look

back with astonishment and pity upon those you have left still grovelling in the mire of bigotry and superstition. The scales will drop from your eyes, and the hitherto mystery of the scriptures will at once open to your gaze, as the product of ambitious, fraudulent, or ignorant men; and you will feel a conviction of this truth, that as natural philosophy tends to dispel ignorance, bigotry, and superstition, so it is peculiarly calculated to destroy the prevailing superstitions of Mahomed and of Christ.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Sunday.—It would be easy to show that a great many of the crimes which are committed in this country have their origin in the idleness to which our laborers and mechanics are *compelled* to submit upon a Sunday. The proverb says, "idleness is the root of all evil." The handicraftsman who is *not* allowed to follow his usual occupation on a Sunday is naturally at a loss how to spend his time. He feels a languor and a listlessness which he cannot overcome. To help to kill the tedium of this endless day, he goes to church, where he has at least the satisfaction of meeting some of his acquaintances, and talking over the scandal or the news of the day. He then joins mechanically in prayers which are mumbled to him; listens devoutly to an unintelligible sermon, till he can command his attention no longer; then falls fast asleep till the dropping of the speaker's voice towards the close arouses him from his nap. Well; he has by this means killed a couple of hours; but what is he to do with the rest of this everlasting day? Work, he dare not; reap, he cannot; profane amusements are out of the question; his ennui redoubles; it becomes insupportable; he flies to the alehouse for relief, gets intoxicated, squanders the money which should maintain his family; contracts vicious habits which can never be removed; and sinks from one degree of depravity to another, till at last he becomes fit for any crime.

How many young men who have ended their career by an ignominious public death, have dated the commencement of their vicious courses from what their ghostly confessors are pleased to term "a breaking of the Sabbath," or "a profanation of the Lord's Day;" in other words, from the state of absolute idleness which the law imposes upon them on that day! And who is to blame for this? Why you, ye sanctified lawgivers, who by depriving us of the power of spending one day in every seven according to our inclination, force us to be idle and consequently vicious! Supposing the Almighty to have so much of the human disposition in him as to be pleased with adoration, flattery, and prayer, surely an hour or two at a time is amply sufficient for these purposes, and the rest of the day might be left at our own free disposal. If we need rest, we shall take it; but, in God's name, leave us to judge whether we need it or not. Then pray do reflect a little upon the egregious folly of that system which robs the poor man of the seventh part of his time, without the smallest benefit to any human being except the black hornets! The barbarian who wrote Leviticus says the Lord ordained the land to lie waste every seventh year. Why do not you adopt this law also, seeing that it emanates from the same source as the others? It is at least equally rational.

Intolerance.—It is notorious that those who are the most forward in the ranks of persecution are people professing religious sentiments! That those who say their religion breathes peace on earth and good will towards mankind should be the first to inflict misery on their fellow creatures, seems at first sight rather paradoxical; but an investigation of their religious books convinces us that it is the contradictory sentiments which they contain that have caused that confusion and bloodshed with which the Christian history is so shockingly stained. We shall find in their religious books of peace and good will one sentence which declares, that "he who believeth shall be saved, and he who believeth not shall be damned." This barbarous and unphilosophical sentiment has caused more division and bloodshed than any other sentiment which ever was written. It is this ignorant and brutal sentiment which has enabled the protestant to look unmoved on his catholic victim, and the catholic to enjoy the expiring groans of the protestant heretic. To elucidate this part, let us descend into the dungeons of the inquisition. The pale victim, whose emaciated body hath been wasted by long confinement, stands arraigned before his judge, who thus addresseth him: "The unbounded mercy of our most holy religion induces us once more to implore a renunciation of your damnable heresies: do you believe that the sacramental elements are the very body and blood of our most blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?" Here the pale lips of the trembling victim begin to move, and he answers: "Although no sinner can entertain sentiments of deeper humility, or be more willing to render pure worship unto Almighty God than I am, yet reason forbids my assenting to the doctrine of transubstantiation." "Obstinate heretic! dost thou oppose that blind infidel reason to the positive declaration of Almighty God, 'Take and eat, this is my body,' &c.?" Now the unfortunate victim is consigned to his fate, and his judges, glorying in his sufferings, exclaim, "How much better had it been for mankind had those vile heretics, Luther and Calvin, like this wretch, shook, with their agonizing shrieks and deep convulsive groans, these prison walls to their foundation, than to have lived to disseminate that sentimental poison, by the deadly influence of which millions of immortal souls are now howling in hell, that would otherwise have been singing eternal praises to the lamb?"

Nature.—We know that the animals on this globe are possessed of from one or two to five senses; but, from the continued gradation of senses and intelligence among them, we have every reason to infer, that the animals inhabiting other globes in the universe have more senses, qualifications, and intelligence: some higher orders of them may be able to perceive and understand the powers and properties of matter, and also the grand causes of the operations of Nature. Perhaps the principle of gravitation, of the magnet, of electricity, of vegetation, of animation, and even of mind or consciousness itself, are more perfectly known to them, than they are to us; and for aught we know, the shapes, sizes, and qualifications of the different animated beings may be varied in every different planet throughout the immensity of space. From this consideration, we may easily perceive, that it would require all the senses, qualifications, and knowledge of all the animated beings in the universe, united into

one being, to form a correct judgment of Nature. Will vain and dogmatical theologians pretend to dictate to man how or what he is to think concerning Nature and her laws?

Religion is a sort of game law instituted for the amusement and feeding of the rich, and the plunder and oppression of the poor man. It is now kept up for no other purpose whatever, than to tax and stupify the industrious man, and to render him sneaking and servile to those in office and in power. The priests are all to a man so many tax promoters, so many tax gatherers, so many tax eaters, and so many undeviating supporters of all that is corrupt in the institutions, or their managers, in the country. You continually cry out that the anti Christian publications have a tendency to *unsettle the opinions of the young and the unwary*. But, whoever heard before this that *settled opinions* were the property of youth? Is any youth, of either sex, under twelve years of age, competent to form a settled opinion on any subject; particularly a subject of so mysterious a nature as religion. Youth are taught to repeat words upon the subject, so are parrots, but I have to learn from you that they ever formed settled opinions upon the matter.

Free Press Association.—A general meeting of the Association will be held, in the Temple of Arts, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 24th instant, at 11 o'clock forenoon, on business of importance. The *theological* lectures will be continued in the afternoon, at half past 2 o'clock.

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 6.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 29, 1828.

VOL. 8.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE BIBLE.

Mr. Editor—I was, during the early part of my life, in the habit of reading the Bible, and placing as much confidence in it as any one. This you would be led to infer by my former communication. But, like many others, I read my Bible without thinking. I was told by my parents, and by the parson, that it was not only my duty to read, but to believe; and I did believe both the Bible and all that the minister said besides. Then, sir, as in the days of my ancestors, it was the practice with us, like so many hungry chickens, to pick up every crumb that fell from the pulpit; and even to forget the text was considered disgraceful. Meeting, too, was attended with such glorious exactness, that the pastor knew his flock, and the sheep, too, knew the pastor; for if any one was missing, the pastor made it a part of his holy vocation to know the reason why.

Under such a state of church discipline, it will not be thought surprising that I should have considered it unnecessary for me to think for myself on religious subjects: so that, instead of reading first, and then believing, I believed first, and then read; and in this way I actually read through the Bible in course, and knew but little more when I had finished than when I began it; that is, I knew nothing about the Jews as a separate nation—nothing of the extent, situation, or relative position of their country. Indeed, Mr. Editor, I thought that in reading the Bible I was reading about all the people of “olden times.” But after I had acquired some little knowledge in geography, which my good parents were not remarkably blessed with, I found some little difficulty in conceiving how so small a country as that of Judea should be capable of subsisting a population so numerous. Still I was a good believer, and never disputed with, or asked impertinent questions of, our saintly minister; and if I ever wandered from the old presbyterian platform, I was always glad to return and protect myself within the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Christian faith, as taught by parson Edwards; and here I might, perhaps, have been to this day, had it not been for the circumstance which I mentioned in my former letter.

Now, then, behold me a new creature; and, grown more venturous by the example of my husband, finally concluding that it would be just as well for me to think for myself, as to hire a minister by the year to think for me. Since the adoption of this opinion, I have found many, very many, things in the Bible, not only a *little* contradictory, but, to me, perfectly irreconcilable. I will at present only mention one: about two years ago, [I remember the time very well,] having taken down my Bi-

ble and dusted it—for I delight in a clean book—what a pity, said I to myself, that the inside of it is not a little more free from filth! My attention was caught by the second chapter of Matthew; but before I got to the end, it occurred to me that I had, in some of the other three books, seen a very different account of Christ's birth and infancy; and, after a little search, I found it in the second of Luke. In comparing them, however, I found them so materially different, that it was impossible for me to reconcile them.

Perhaps I ought to have stated to you before, that when I ceased to have full faith in the Bible, the reverend "doctors of divinity" never came to partake of my good young hyson and sweetmeats. Perhaps they think my tea not as good as it used to be when I was orthodox; or that I shall trouble them with my doubts. Be that as it may, when I now find any thing in the Bible which I cannot reconcile by the force of my own reasoning, I am almost of necessity obliged to take up with St. Paul's advice, "and ask my husband at home." I applied to him in this instance. He said, he had not noticed the differences I mentioned; but, with me, thought them quite irreconcilable. It has since occurred to me, that the editor of the *Antidote* would be a very proper person; and therefore I would apply to him through your paper to have the two passages explained. And if this editor will compose and reconcile this point, (and he certainly will not refuse the request of a female,) I will acknowledge the favor by further application in cases of equal difficulty to be found in the Bible, which are neither "few nor far between."

Athens, February 16, 1828.

OCTAVIA.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 72.

Of the Person of Jesus.—Jesus was born at a time when fanaticism was still dominant, but when decency began to show itself a little. The long commerce of the Jews with the Greeks and Romans had given to the respectable part of the nation manners less vulgar and irrational; but the populace, who are always incorrigible, preserved the same spirit of folly. Some Jews, who were oppressed under the kings of Syria, and under the Romans, had then imagined that God would send them a liberator, a messiah. This expectation ought naturally to be fulfilled in the person of Herod. He was their king, and an ally of the Romans; he had rebuilt their temple, the architecture of which greatly surpassed that of Solomon, since he had filled up a precipice on which that edifice was erected. The people no longer groaned under a foreign yoke; they paid no imposts but to their own monarch; the Jewish worship flourished, and the ancient laws were respected. Jerusalem, we must confess, was then in its greatest splendor.

Idleness and superstition brought forth many factions or religious societies; sadducees, pharisees, Essenians, Judaïtes, Therapeutæ, and Johnists, or disciples of John; in the same way as the papists have their Molinists, Jansenists, jacobins, and cordeliers. However, at that time no one spoke of the expectation of a messiah. Neither Josephus nor Philo, who have entered into such minute details of the Jewish history,

say that there was any expectation of the coming of a christ, an anointed, a liberator, a redeemer, of whom they had then less need than ever. And if there had been one, it must have been Herod. There was, in reality, a party or sect called Herodians, who acknowledged Herod to be the messenger of God.

At all times this people had given the names of Anointed, of Messiah, of Christ, to any one that had been serviceable to them. Sometimes it was given to their own pontiffs, and sometimes to foreign princes. The Jew who compiled the reveries of Isaiah makes him employ a vile flattery, very worthy of a Jewish slave: "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him," &c. (Isaiah xlv. 1.) The 1st book of Kings (2 Kings ix. 6) calls the wicked Jehu, anointed. A prophet announces to Hazael, king of Damascus, that he is the messiah and anointed of the Most High. Ezekiel says to the king of Tyrus, "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty—thou art the anointed cherub." (Ezekiel xxviii. 12, 14.) If this prince of Tyrus had known that these titles were given to him in Judea, it rested only with himself to have been a kind of demigod. He had an apparent right to such a title, supposing Ezekiel to have been inspired. The evangelists have not said so much for Jesus.

However, it is certain, that no Jew either hoped, desired, or announced an anointed, a messiah, in the time of Herod the Great, under whom, it is said, Jesus was born. After the death of Herod, when Judea was governed as a Roman province, and another Herod was established, by the Romans, tetrarch of the little barbarous district of Galilee, many fanatics took upon themselves to preach among the ignorant, particularly in this Galilee, where the Jews were more ignorant than elsewhere. It is thus that Fox, a poor cobbler, established in our own times the sect of quakers, among the peasantry in one of our counties. The first that founded a Calvinist church in France was a woollen carder, named John Le Clerc. It is thus that Munzer, John of Leyden, and others, founded anabaptism among the poor people in some of the cantons of Germany.

I have seen the convulsionists in France institute a small sect, among the mob in one of the faubourgs of Paris. Sectarious began in this way all the world over. They are generally beggars who rail against the government, and finish either by becoming chiefs of a party, or by being hanged. Jesus was put to death at Jerusalem, without having been anointed: John the Baptist had already been condemned to death. Each of them left some followers among the dregs of the people. Those of John established themselves in Arabia, where they still exist. Those of Jesus were at first very obscure, but as soon as they began to be associated with some of the Greeks, they began to be known.

The Jews under Tiberius having carried their accustomed knaveries to a higher pitch than ever, and having likewise seduced and robbed Fulvia, wife of Saturninus, were driven from Rome, and could not be reestablished there, except by giving much money. They were likewise severely punished under Caligula and Claudius. Their disasters served in some measure to embolden the Galileans, who comprised the new sect, to separate themselves from the Jewish communion. At length, they found some who were a little acquainted with letters, who put themselves

at their head, and who wrote in their favor against the Jews. This was what produced such an immense number of gospels, a Greek word, signifying "good news." Each gave a life of Jesus; none of them agreed with the rest, but all had some resemblance by the number of incredible prodigies which, to vie with each other, they attribute to their founder.

The synagogue, on its part, seeing that a new sect had sprang up in its bosom, and that it was vending a life of Jesus very injurious to the sanhedrin, began to make inquiries respecting this man, to whom it had not hitherto paid any attention.

We have still a stupid work of that time, entitled "Sepher Toldos Jeschut." It appears to have been written many years after the death of Jesus, during the time when the gospels were compiled. This book, like all others of the Jews and Christians, is full of prodigies; but, extravagant as it is, we must confess that many statements contained in it are much more probable than those related in our gospels. It is said in the "Toldos Jeschut," that Jesus was the son of a woman named Mirja, who was married in Bethlehem to a poor man of the name of Jocanam. There was in the neighborhood a soldier of the name of Joseph Pander, a well shaped, good looking man, who fell in love with Mirja or Maria. As the Hebrews do not express their vowels, they frequently take *a* for *j*. Mirja became with child by Pander. Jocanam, who was seized with confusion and despondency, quitted Bethlehem, and went to secrete himself in Babylon, where there were still many Jews. The conduct of Mirja disgraced her, and her son Jesus, or Jeschut, was declared a bastard by the judges of the city. When he became old enough to be admitted into the public school, he placed himself among the legitimate children; however, he was compelled to leave this class. Hence arose the animosity against priests, which he manifested when he attained manhood. He lavished on them the most opprobrious epithets, calling them "a race of vipers and whitened sepulchres." Having, at length, quarrelled with Judas, a Jew, regarding a question of interest, as well as concerning some religious points, Judas denounced him to the sanhedrin. He was arrested, began to cry, and beg pardon; but in vain. He was flogged, stoned, and afterward put to death.

Such is the substance of this history. Inspid fables and impertinent miracles have since been added, which injured it much; but the book was known in the second century. Celsus quotes it; Origen refutes it, and the book has reached us quite disfigured.

The chief part of what I have just stated is certainly more probable, more natural, and more conformable to what passes in the world in our own days, than any of the fifty gospels of the Christians. It was much more likely that Joseph Pander was the father of Mirja's child, than that an angel came from heaven, with God's compliments to a carpenter's wife, in the same way as Jupiter sent Mercury to visit Alcmena. Every thing they tell us about Jesus is worthy of the Old Testament, and of Bedlam. They bring I know not what kind of *Agion pneuma*, a Holy Ghost, that had hitherto never been spoken of, and which they have since told us is the third part of God.

Jesus becomes the son of God, and of a Jewess: he is not yet God himself, but a superior being. He works miracles. The first he per-

forms is to have himself conveyed by the devil to the top of one of the mountains of Judea, where he could discover all the kingdoms of the earth. His raiment appeared white. What a miracle! He changes water into wine at a repast, where the guests were already drunk. (It is difficult to say which of those pretended prodigies is the most ridiculous. Many people give a preference to that of the wine at the marriage of Cana. That God should say to his mother, the Jewess, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" is a strange thing; but that he should feast with drunkards, and should change six pitchers of water into wine for men that had already drank too much, is a blasphemy as execrable as it is impertinent. The Hebrew text uses a word which answers to "tipsy," or half drunk; the Vulgate says "inebriate.") He dries a fig tree, because it does not furnish him with figs in the month of February. Yet the author of this tale has at least the honesty to tell us, that it was not the season for figs. He sups with women, and then with publicans; and yet it is pretended in his history that he looked upon publicans as bad characters. He goes into the temple; into the large inclosure where the priests resided, in the court where retail dealers were authorized by law to sell fowls, pigeons, and lambs to those who came to sacrifice. He takes a whip, and plays upon the shoulders of the dealers, whom he drives out, as well as their fowls, pigeons, sheep, and oxen, and strews their money on the ground. Yet he is suffered to proceed without interruption! And if we believe the book attributed to John, they content themselves with asking him to work a miracle, in order to show his authority to play pranks like these in a place so respected.

It was a very great miracle for thirty or forty tradesmen to suffer themselves to be kicked, and to lose their money, by one man, without saying anything to him. There is nothing in Don Quixotte which approaches such extravagance as this. But instead of performing the miracle they demand of him, he contents himself with saying, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John ii. 19.) The Jews reply, according to John, "Forty and six years was this temple building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?" It was asserting a great falsehood to say that Herod had been employed forty-six years in building the temple of Jerusalem. The Jews, in their reply, could not make use of such a falsehood. By the bye, this alone shows that the gospels have been written by men who were scarcely acquainted with any thing.

After this foolish enterprize, Jesus is said to have preached in the villages. What kind of discourses do they make him hold forth? He compares the kingdom of heaven to a grain of mustard seed; to a morsel of leaven, mixed in three measures of meal; to a net, that catches both good and bad fish; to a king, who kills his chickens to make a feast at his son's wedding, and sends his servants to invite the neighbors to it. The neighbors kill the servants that request them to dine, and the king kills the people who killed his servants, and burns their city. He then sends to compel the beggars on the highway to come and dine with him; and perceiving a poor guest who had no garment, instead of giving him one, he causes him to be thrown into a dungeon. This is the kingdom of heaven according to Matthew. In the other discourses, the kingdom of heaven is always compared to a usurer, who will absolutely have cent.

per cent. profit. They confess that archbishop Tillotson preaches in a different style.

How did the history of Jesus finish? By events which have happened in every country to people who wished to stir up the populace, without being sufficiently capable either of arming that population, or of gaining to themselves powerful protectors. They most commonly finish by being hanged. Jesus was put to death. He was executed publicly, but he rose from the grave privately. At length he ascended into heaven, in the presence of eighty of his disciples, without any other person in Judea seeing his ascension; which was, however, easy to be seen, and ought to have made a great noise in the world.

Our Creed, called by the papists *Credo*, which was attributed to the apostles, though evidently fabricated more than four hundred years after these apostles, acquaints us, that before Jesus ascended into heaven, he went on a tour to hell. Not a single word is said about this journey in the gospels, and yet it is one of the principal articles of the Christian faith. We cannot be Christians if we do not believe that Jesus descended into hell. Who was the first, that imagined this journey? It was Athanasius, about three hundred and fifty years after the event. It is in his treatise against Appollinarus, on the incarnation of the Lord, where he mentions that the soul of Jesus descended into hell, while his body remained in the sepulchre. His words are worthy of attention, and show us with what sagacity and wisdom Athanasius reasoned: "It was necessary after his death that his divers essential parts should perform divers functions; that his body should remain in the sepulchre to destroy corruption, and that his soul should go into hell to vanquish death." The African St. Augustin, in a letter that he wrote to Evodus, seems to agree with him: *Quis ergo nisi infidelis negaverit fuisse apud inferos Christum?* Jerome, his cotemporary, was nearly of the same opinion; and it was during the time of Augustin and Jerome that this *Credo* was composed, which, among ignorant people, passed for the Apostles' Creed.

Thus were opinions, creeds, and sects established. But how could these detestable fooleries be credited? How did they overturn the other absurdities of the Greeks and Romans, and, at last, the empire itself? How have they caused so many evils, so many civil wars, lighted so many faggots, and spilled so much blood? We are going to account for it.

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 1828.

Social System.—With feelings of real satisfaction we lay before our readers an extract of a letter, dated Feb. 1, from our correspondent at New Orleans, containing some highly gratifying particulars, which he learned from Mr. Owen, as to the progress of the Social System. We have, also, in the New Orleans papers, a file of which we have received to the 2d instant, several articles respecting Mr. O.'s proceedings during his stay in that city, among which there is a notice of his "challenge" (referred to by our correspondent) to the clergy, to have a private or public investigation of their religion; and declaring all the religions of the

world to be founded in the ignorance of mankind; and that their systems are the sources of all the delusion, vice, and misery with which they are afflicted."

In answer to this *challenge*, the clergy, aware of the rottenness of their system, endeavored to evade a discussion by representing Mr. Owen as *insane*, and, therefore, unworthy of notice. In reply to this ridiculous and unavailing charge, the following letter appeared in the *Mercantile Advertiser* of the 31st January:

"MR. OWEN,

"I am one of those who wish to see fair play between all opponents, whether they wield the sword or the pen. I observed in your paper of yesterday morning an article purporting to be from the clergy of this city, although it is not signed by them officially. I examined it with attention, because I had previously listened to all the lectures which Mr. Owen had delivered. Although Mr. Owen animadverted with severe language on the errors of every class in society, he was never personal in a single instance; he appears to act faithfully on the principles which he advocates. His writings, his speaking, his tone of voice, and his whole manner, indicate most strongly how deeply he feels a sincere charity for all his brethren of mankind, without being in any degree influenced by prejudice of religion or country. If there ever was a truly charitable and benevolent being in existence, I pronounce this man to be so. Now as to his alleged *madness*, which however I think could not have been made by the clergy, if they had attended his lectures, I am not quite so sure about it. It is true, his manner is singularly collected before an audience. He seems more master of himself in that situation, considering the prejudice which he has to oppose, than I could have supposed possible: nothing less than a deep conviction of the truth and importance of the task he has undertaken, must create this character in any one. But, on the other hand, when I perceive that he depends on truth alone to enable him to overthrow all the errors of ages; that, without the slightest fear, he puts himself in direct opposition to the whole collected mass of the priesthood and of the ignorant in all countries, who have been for so many thousand years trained by the former to have the greater dread and horror to examine truth; why, when I consider all these things, and add thereto the enormous sums which he has expended, in preparing the world to receive his doctrines, and the situations in which he voluntarily and with cheerfulness places himself, I do, I confess, somewhat doubt, whether he can be quite sane to give himself all this trouble to effect his object. To him, it is evident, it appears superior to all other considerations, and the clergy, if the communication really came from them, are wrong in supposing Mr. Owen to be opposed to real virtue. He says it is nowhere to be found in practice, and that the preaching of the priesthood over the world for several thousand years has not improved the condition of mankind; but that their very preachings stand in the way of all true charity, and ever will do so as long as they shall be permitted to govern and oppress the human race by cultivating their imaginations, and in infancy destroying the reasoning faculties. Whatever else may be said of Mr. Owen, I am sure from the whole tenor of his life, that he sincerely desires to improve

the condition of his fellow beings without regard to sect or party. He complains, on the contrary, that the clergy preach peace, while all their doctrines necessarily lead to war; that they preach charity, while all their doctrines necessarily lead to the most uncharitable feelings for all who differ from them; that they preach poverty and humility, while they endeavor to grasp at all power, and to live in comfort, and often great luxury, at the expense of the laborer who does not fare nearly as well: in short, that they do preach the names of the virtues, but they know not yet how to produce them in practice. "A FRIEND TO FAIR PLAY."

Although we do not expect that the priesthood will encounter a man who so fearlessly attacks public prejudices as Mr. Owen, the boldness of his challenge will have the effect of exciting a spirit of inquiry, which cannot fail to be beneficial to the cause of truth. That spirit has, in fact, gone abroad, never to be extinguished. We every day hear of its progress in various parts of the Union. A jealousy of their spiritual guides is evidently gaining ground among mankind, who appear determined to throw off the yoke under which they have so long been compelled to groan by an arrogant and unprincipled clergy.

Extract of a letter dated Feb. 1, 1822.

"As you will perceive by the newspapers, Mr. Robert Owen is in this city. He has delivered a course of lectures, explanatory of the "Social System." They were not so well attended, by numbers, as they might have been. However, to suffice for this, those who were present were men of the highest standing in society. I wished to attend his whole course, but as I had a severe cold at the commencement, (in this climate, I was obliged to be careful,) I therefore confined myself to the house. I attended his fifth lecture, which was given at the Government House (where the legislature sit.) There were two or three hundred persons present, all of whom seemed to listen with attention to every thing that was said. I did not attend the sixth (the concluding lecture.) On Sunday morning last he gave a public lecture (gratis) at the American Theatre. The day being wet, it was not so well attended as it would have been, had the weather been otherwise. I attended, and think there were about five hundred persons in the house; in this lecture he rubbed them pretty hard as to their religious ideas and observances. In the afternoon, he gave a second (and last) public lecture in the Government House. The weather was fine; the room was crowded to excess; and in a short time it was impossible to get as near as the outer door. In the papers of this morning, he challenges the priesthood to an open investigation of the foundation on which their fabric of holy religion stands.

Soon after Mr. Owen's arrival, I called on him, and was received in a very friendly manner. He tells of the most unexpected success of his system in England, and also in America. He says societies on his plan are so fast increasing, that every day he hears of some new one commenced, or about to do so. I have given him an account of how things have gone on in the north since his departure, as far as it lay in my power. He seemed much pleased with my intelligence; and I have given him the numbers of the *Correspondent* which I had, to take with him on his way to New Harmony. He leaves here in a day or two for Nashville;

thence he goes to Louisville, and so on to all the principal places between this and his settlement, delivering a course of lectures at each."

Society of Free Enquirers.—It gives us pleasure to inform the friends of liberal principles, that an association, under the title of the "Society of Free Enquirers," has been formed in the upper part of this city, having the same objects and views as the *Free Press Association*. The daily increasing numbers, which could not be accommodated in the Hall of the latter, and its great distance from many parts of the city, required that some arrangement should be made, to meet the wishes of those, residing in these parts, who were desirous of attending the public lectures. The establishment of the "Society of Free Enquirers," while it meets the approbation of every well wisher to mental improvement, and is calculated to enlarge the circle of knowledge, cannot fail, in cooperation with the *Free Press Association*, of paralyzing more effectually the efforts of bigotry and fanaticism. Such, indeed, is the prevailing disposition to investigate religious dogmas, and to get rid of priestly domination, that we have no doubt we shall speedily have to record the formation of other associations, in other parts of this extensive city, in aid of the diffusion of rational principles.

The second lecture before the "Society of Free Enquirers," will be delivered on Sunday (tomorrow) afternoon, at three o'clock, in the Military Hall, corner of Sixth avenue and Fourth street, Greenwich.

Progress of Liberal Principles.—It is with unfeigned pleasure that we give the following act of the General Assembly of Rhode Island, relative to freedom of opinion in matters of religion, which is said to have emanated from a late decision of judge Story, in Providence, R. I.; by which a witness, on account of his disbelief in some religious dogma, was declared incompetent to give evidence in a court of justice:

"An act declaratory of the laws of this state, relating to freedom of opinion in matters of religion.

"Be it enacted by the General Assembly, and by authority thereof it is enacted, that by the laws of this state, all men are free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same do not in any wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil rights, or capacities; and that no man's opinions in matters of religion, his belief, or disbelief, *can be legally inquired into, or be made a subject of investigation, with a view to his qualifications to hold office, or give testimony, by any man or men acting judicially or legislatively.*"

It is, indeed, high time that this liberal and just example should be followed by all the other states of the Union. It is utter absurdity that a man, honest and virtuous, should be debarred from giving evidence against an impostor who would deprive him of his rights, because he does not believe, or *profess* to believe, what he cannot comprehend; while the most debauched wretch who believes in a future state of felicity, fire, and brimstone, and who would not scruple to abuse this right, is allowed to exercise it without question. In this state, we believe, no one has a right to *question* a witness as to his religious opinions; but if he openly disavows his belief in certain favorite dogmas of certain Christian sects,

the court is bound, according to "common law," (i. e. unjust decisions,) to reject his evidence. This is justice struggling with the fanaticism of our fathers, which ought to have died with them, and the perpetuation of which, in these days of freedom, is a sad drawback on the mental privileges which our political rights entitle us to. Than the above act, nothing can be more liberal, just, and explicit: it is a monument of fame to the body which produced it, and a credit to the people represented by that assembly.

From the New Harmony Gazette of Jan. 30, 1828.

From Miss Frances Wright we have received a communication, regarding the establishment commenced by that lady in 1825, at Nashoba. Her remarks on human nature, and the exposition she affords of the view which led her to found the colony of Nashoba, and of the principles which regulate the conduct of the members of that society, cannot fail highly to interest every friend to mental liberty, to social improvement, and to every measure which may conduce to elevate our species and to remove the ignorance and misery which has so long oppressed and deluded our unhappy race. Few would *dare* to express their opinions openly and fearlessly as she has done, when these opinions are completely at variance with many of the most deep rooted prejudices which exist among us; yet all who have examined the subject, with minds unwarpd by prejudice, must confess the force and correctness of her arguments,—and unanswerable proof of the lack of moral courage, of which our authoress justly complains, even amongst the boldest and freest of men.

The practice which will proceed from these her principles, when adopted as the basis of action, can nowhere be commenced under so auspicious auspices as within the pale of a community. Those of our species who at any time have entertained opinions in morals or religion, opposed to their surrounding fellow men, if they have even ventured to promulgate openly their ideas, have been prohibited from adopting them in practice,—in olden times under pain of death,—in our day, under pain of poverty and ruin, or of the forfeiture of all intercourse with their fellows; or if some philosopher, peculiarly daring, has been hardy enough, regardless of the consequences, to rebel against the commands of custom and to obey only the voice of reason, his isolated position in society, so ungenial to the feelings of a social being, has deterred all from profiting by his example, save a few master spirits equally daring and callous with himself. When however a number of our race endowed with congenial minds, and united in sentiment, congregate together for all the purposes of life, they may bid defiance, as it were, to the world; and, as they possess among themselves the means of supplying their physical wants, of cultivating their mental powers, and of gratifying the social feelings inherent in humanity, they may follow in security the dictates of reason, and, unless politically restrained, they may defy alike the finger of scorn and the shafts of derision, though raised by ignorance and pointed by superstition. Of this truth our authoress is fully aware, and therefore invites congenial minds, from every quarter of the globe, to unite with her, having experience as their conductor, and reason as their guide, in the search for truth and the pursuit of happiness.

NASHOBA.

Explanatory Notes, respecting the Nature and Objects of the Institution of Nashoba, and of the Principles upon which it is founded. Addressed to the Friends of Human Improvement, in all Countries and of all Nations. By Frances Wright.

This institution was founded in the autumn of 1825, in the western district of the state of Tennessee, North America, by Frances Wright.

The object of the founder was to attempt the practice of certain principles, which in theory had been frequently advocated. She had observed that the step between theory and practice is usually great; that while many could reason, few were prepared to proceed to action, and that yet mankind must reasonably hesitate to receive as truths, theories, however ingenious, if unsupported by experiment. In the individual who should first attempt an experiment opposed to all existing opinions and practice, she believed two requisites to be indispensable; mental courage, and, as some writers have defined it, a passion for the improvement of the human race. She felt within herself these necessary qualifications; and, strongly convinced of the truth of the principles which, after mature consideration, her heart and head had embraced, she determined to apply all her energies, and to devote her slender fortune, to the building up of an institution which should have those principles for its base, and whose destinies, she fondly hoped, might tend to convince mankind of their moral beauty and practical utility. Actuated, from her earliest youth, by a passionate interest in the welfare of man, she had peculiarly addressed herself to the study of his past and present condition. All her observations tended to corroborate the opinion which her own feelings might possibly, in the first instance, have predisposed her to adopt,—*that men are virtuous in proportion as they are happy, and happy in proportion as they are free.* She saw this truth exemplified in the history of modern as of ancient times. Every where knowledge, mental refinement, and the gentler, as the more ennobling, feelings of humanity, have kept pace, influx or reflux, with the growth or depression of the spirit of freedom.

But while human liberty has engaged the attention of the enlightened, and enlisted the feelings of the generous of all civilized nations, may we not inquire if this liberty has been rightly understood? Has it not been with limitations and exceptions, tending to foster jealousies, or to inspire injurious ambition? Has it, in short, been pure and entire in principle, universal in the objects it embraces, and equal for all races and classes of men? Liberty without equality, what is it but a chimera? and equality, what is it also but a chimera unless it extend to all the enjoyments, exertions, and advantages, intellectual, and physical, of which our nature is capable?

One nation, and, as yet, one nation only, has declared all men "born free and equal," and conquered the political freedom and equality of its citizens—with the lamentable exception, indeed, of its citizens of color. But is there not a liberty yet more precious than what is termed *national*, and an equality more precious than what is termed *political*? Before we are citizens, are we not human beings, and ere we can exercise equal rights, must we not possess equal advantages, equal means of improvement and of enjoyment.

Political liberty may be said to exist in the United States of America, and (without advertg to the yet unsettled, though we may fondly trust secured republics of America's southern continent) *only there*. Moral liberty exists *nowhere*.

By political liberty we may understand the liberty of speech and of action without incurring the violence of authority or the penalties of law. By moral liberty may we not understand the *free exercise of the liberty of speech and of action*, without incurring the intolerance of popular prejudice and ignorant public opinion? To secure the latter where the former liberty exists, what is necessary "but to will it." Far truer is the assertion as here applied to moral liberty than as heretofore applied to political liberty. To free ourselves of thrones, aristocracies, and hierarchies, of fleets and armies, and all the arrayed panoply of organized despotism, it is *not* sufficient to will it. We must fight for it, and fight for it too with all the odds of wealth, and power, and position against us. But when the field is won, to use it is surely ours; and if the possession of the right of free action inspire not the courage to exercise the right, liberty has done but little for us. It is much to have the fetters broken from our limbs, but yet better is it to have them broken from the mind. It is much to have *declared* men free and equal, but it shall be more when they are rendered so; when means shall be sought and found, and employed to develop all the intellectual and physical powers of all human beings, without regard to sex or condition, class, race, nation, or color; and when men shall learn to view each other as members of one great family, with equal claims to enjoyment and equal capacities for labor and instruction, admitting always the sole differences arising out of the varieties exhibited in individual organization.

It were superfluous to elucidate, by argument, the baleful effects arising out of the division of labor as now existing, and which condemns the large half of mankind to an existence purely physical, and the remaining portion to pernicious idleness, and occasionally to exertions painfully, because solely, intellectual. He who lives in the single exercise of his mental faculties, however usefully or curiously directed, is equally an imperfect animal with the man who knows only the exercise of his muscles.

Let us consider the actual condition of our species. Where shall we find even a single individual, male or female, whose mental and physical powers have been fairly cultivated and developed? How then is it with the great family of human kind? We have addressed our ingenuity to improve the nature and beautify the forms of all the tribe of animals domesticated by our care, but man has still neglected man; ourselves, our own species, our own nature are deemed unworthy, even unbecoming, objects of experiment. Why should we refuse to the human animal care at least equal to that bestowed on the horse or the dog? His forms are surely not less susceptible of beauty; and his faculties, more numerous and exalted, may challenge, at the least, equal developement.

The spirit of curiosity and inquiry, which distinguishes the human animal, and which not all the artificial habits and whimsical prejudices of mis-called civilization have sufficed to quench, seems as yet, for the most part, to have been idly directed. Arts and sciences are multiplied, wants imagined, and luxuries supplied; but the first of all sciences is yet left in the

germ : the first great science of human beings, the science of human life, remains untouched, unknown, unstudied ; and he who should speak of it might perhaps excite only astonishment. All the wants and comforts of man are now abstracted, as it were, from himself. We hear of the wealth of nations, of the powers of production, of the demand and supply of markets, and we forget that these words mean no more, if they mean any thing, than the happiness, labor, and necessities of men. Is it not the unnatural division of mankind into classes,—operative, consuming, professional, enlightened, ignorant, &c. which inspires this false mode of reasoning, and leads the legislator and economist to see in the most useful of their fellow creatures only so much machinery for the creation of certain articles of commerce, and to pronounce a nation rich, not in proportion to the number of individuals who enjoy, but to the mass of ideal wealth thrown into commercial circulation. Surely it is time to inquire if our very sciences are not frequently as unmeaning as our teachers are mistaken and our books erroneous. Surely it is time to examine into the meaning of words and the nature of things, and to arrive at simple facts, not received upon the dictum of learned authorities, but upon attentive and personal observation of what is passing around us. And surely it is more especially time to inquire why occupations the most useful and absolutely necessary to our existence and well being, should be held in disrepute, and those the least useful, nay, frequently the most decidedly mischievous, should be held in honor. The husbandman who supports us by the fruits of his labor, the artisan to whom we owe all the comforts and conveniences of life, are banished from what is termed intellectual society, nay, worse, but too often condemned to the most severe physical privations and the grossest mental ignorance ; while the soldier, who lives by our crimes, the lawyer by our quarrels and our rapacity, and the priest by our credulity or our hypocrisy, are honored with public consideration and applause.

Were human life studied as a science, and, as it truly is, the first and most important of all sciences, to which every other should be viewed only as the handmaiden, it would soon appear that we are only happy in a due and well proportioned exercise of all our powers, physical, intellectual, and moral ; that bodily labor becomes a pleasure when varied with mental occupation, and cheered by free and happy affection, and that no occupation can, in itself, be degrading, which has the comfort and well being of man for its object.

It will appear evident upon attentive consideration that equality of intellectual and physical advantages is the only sure foundation of liberty, and that such equality may best, and perhaps only, be obtained by a union of interests and cooperation in labor. The existing principle of selfish interest and competition has been carried to its extreme point ; and, in its progress, has isolated the heart of man, blunted the edge of his finest sensibilities, and annihilated all his most generous impulses and sympathies. Need we hesitate to denounce the principle as vicious, which places the interests of each individual in continual opposition to those of his fellows ; which makes of one man's loss, another's gain, and inspires a spirit of accumulation, that crushes every noble sentiment, fosters every degrading one, makes of this globe a scene of strife, and the whole human race, idolaters of gold ? And must we be told that this is in the nature of

things? It certainly is in the nature of our antisocial institutions, and need we seek any stronger argument to urge against them?

Man has been adjudged a social animal. And so he truly is; equally, we might even hazard the assertion, *more* capable of being moved to generous feeling and generous action, through his affections and his interests rightly understood, than he is now moved to violence, rapine, and fraud by hard necessity and his interests falsely interpreted. Let us not libel human nature! It is what circumstance has made it. But, as profiting by experience, we shall change the education of youth, remould our institutions, correct our very ideas of true and false, of right and wrong, of vice and virtue, we may see human nature assume a new form and present an appearance rich in peace and enjoyment—yet more rich in future hope.

How great soever the differences stamped on each individual by original organization, it will readily be conceded, that by fostering the good, and repressing the evil tendencies, by developing every useful faculty and amiable feeling, and cultivating the peculiar talent or talents of every child, as discovered in the course of education, all human beings, (with the single and rare exceptions presented by malconformation of the physical organs,) might be rendered useful and happy. And admitting only a similar capability of improvement in our own species that we see in other races of animals, we may with justice set no limits to our expectations respecting it, so soon as it shall become, through successive generations, the object of judicious care, and enlightened and fearless experiment.

But if we should hazard the assertion, that of children we may make what we please, we must accord that it is otherwise with man. The simplest principles become difficult of practice, when habits, formed in error, have been fixed by time, and the simplest truths hard to receive when prejudice has warped the mind.

The founder of Nashoba looks not for the conversion of the existing generation; she looks not even for its sympathy. All that she ventures to anticipate is, the cooperation of a certain number of individuals acknowledging the same views with herself; a similar interest in the improvement of man, and a similar intrepidity, to venture all things for his welfare. To these individuals, now scattered throughout the world, and unknown probably to each other, she ventures to address herself. From their union, their cooperation, their exertions, she ventures to expect a successful experiment in favor of human liberty and human happiness. Let them unite their efforts (their numbers will not be too many) and in a country where human speech and human actions are free, let them plant their standard in the earth—declare fearlessly their principles, however opposed to the received opinions of mankind, and establish their practice accordingly, with consistence and perseverance.

This has been attempted at Nashoba: not in a spirit of hostility to the practice of the world, but with a strong moral conviction of the superior truth and beauty of that consecrated by the legal act of the founder. By a reference to that act it will be seen that the principles on which the institution is based are those of human liberty and equality without exceptions or limitations,—and its *more especial object, the protection and regeneration of the race of color, universally oppressed and despised in a country self denominated free.* This more immediate object was selected and

specified by the founder, first, because her feelings had been peculiarly enlisted in behalf of the negro; and secondly, because the aristocracy of color is the peculiar vice of the country which she had chosen as the seat of her experiment.

To be continued.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Antichrist!!!—ANTICHRIST IS COME! With the powers of a god to rid the earth of her corruptions, and to aid the growth of human intelligence and human happiness, he comes! To sweep away the foul idolatries of mankind, he comes! To raise the human character to its high destiny, he comes! To prepare the way for a cessation of all wars and bloodshed, all human misery and wretchedness, all famines and wants, he comes! To lead mankind into the paths of virtue, he comes! To root out vice, and evil, and degradation, he comes! To the abolition of Christianity, that curse of many nations, and of all other religions, he comes!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! Rejoice, all ye, the inhabitants of the earth, and be joyful: the day of your salvation from evil is at hand! The trumpet of morality and gladness shall be heard, and all nations shall rejoice in equality and fraternization! Begone, ye kings and priests, begone! Your exposure is complete; your worth is estimated—fly, begone and hide yourselves!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! He will yield protection to all that is virtuous and good: he will destroy all that is vicious and evil! The industrious man shall be no longer robbed of the profit of his industry, nor shall poverty exist where idleness is not found! Rejoice, ye that are now poor and industrious, your complaints have been heard, and shall be respected! Your days of woe and nights of lamentation shall not return! Ye shall neither fast from necessity nor superstitious customs! Industry shall give you health, and plenty shall yield you strength. Intoxication both of mind and of body must be removed from amongst you, or those who still degrade themselves shall become the dunghills of society.

ANTICHRIST IS COME! He will teach you truth! He will expose and explain all existing error! He will root out oppression and tyranny! He will overthrow the temples of idolatry, and raise up temples to reason and to science! His left hand holdeth instruction, and his right hand shall be the index to all human improvement!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! He will emancipate science and purge history of its errors! His coming has long been revealed to mankind, but its purport has not yet been understood; the power of prophecy not having been given to any man! His coming is a physical result of a physical cause; it was decreed to the first of the human species, and no power that is superior to him existed to impede his journeying!

ANTICHRIST IS COME! To rid the earth of all religious quarrels, he comes! To heal the wounds which the hag Religion has inflicted, he comes! To drive her from her corrupting influence over the minds of mankind, he comes! To stay all persecution in defence of error, he comes! To succor and defend the oppressed, to put down the oppressor, and to give

that vigor to the human mind which shall produce an equality of power, he comes! The Printing Press has been his forerunner, and to give it the fullest power to which it is equal, he comes! Finally, to change the condition of the whole of mankind, he comes!

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 7.

NEW YORK, MARCH 8, 1828.

Vol. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROGNOSTICS.

Mr. Editor—Inquiring into futurity unquestionably took its rise from a general custom of the oracular priests of delivering their answers. It subsisted a long time among the Greeks and Romans; and being from them adopted by the Christians, it was not till after a succession of ages that it became exploded among the Romans: it consisted in casually opening some celebrated poet, and among the Christians, the scriptures; and drawing from the first passage which presented itself to the eye a prognostic of what would befall the person who thus made the experiment, or as a guidance under some particular exigency.

The practice, about the third century, crept in among the Christians, of casually opening their sacred books for directions in important circumstances; to know the consequence of events, and what they had to fear from their rulers. This consultation of the divine will from the scriptures was of two kinds: the first consisted, as before said, in casually opening those writings; but not before the guidance of heaven had been implored, with prayer, fasting, and other acts of religion. The second was much more simple: the first words of the scriptures, which were singing, or reading, at the very instant when the person, who came to know the disposition of heaven, entered the church, being considered as a prognostic. St. Austin, in his epistle to Janarius, condemns the practice; but St. Gregory of Tours, by the following instance, which he relates as having happened to himself, shows that he entertained a better opinion of it: "Leudastus, earl of Tours," says he, "who was for ruining me with queen Fregonde, coming to Tours, big with evil designs against me, I withdrew to my oratory under a deep concern, where I took the Psalms to try if, at opening them, I should light upon some consoling verse. My heart revived within me when I cast my eyes on this of the 77th psalm: 'He caused them to go with confidence, while the sea swallowed up their enemies.' Accordingly, the count spake not a word to my prejudice; and, leaving Tours that very day, the boat in which he was sunk in a storm, but his skill in swimming saved him."

The following is also from the same author: "Chranmes having revolted against Clotaire, his brother, and being at Dijon, the ecclesiastics of the place, in order to foreknow the success of the procedure, consulted the sacred books; but instead of the Psalms, they made use of St. Paul's Epistle, and the prophet Isaiah. Opening the latter, they read these words: 'I will pluck up the fence of my vineyard, and it shall be destroyed; because, instead of good it has brought forth bad grapes.'

The Epistles agreeing with the prophecy, it was concluded to be a sure presage of the tragical end of Chranmes."

St. Consortia, in her youth, was passionately courted by a young man of a very powerful family, though she had formed a design of taking the veil. Knowing that a refusal would expose her parents to many inconveniences, and perhaps to danger, she desired a week's time to determine her choice. At the expiration of this time, which she had employed in devout exercises, her lover, accompanied by the most distinguished matrons of the city, came to know her answer: "I can neither accept of you nor refuse you," said she, "every thing is in the hand of God; but if you will agree to it, let us go to church and have a mass said; afterward let us lay the holy gospel on the altar, and say a joint prayer: then we will open the book, to be certainly informed of the divine will in this affair." This proposal could not certainly be refused; and the first verse which met the eye of both was the following: "Whosoever loveth father or mother better than me is not worthy of me." Upon this, Consortia said, "You see, God claims me as his own," and the lover acquiesced.

About the eighth century this practice began to lose ground. It was proscribed by several popes and councils, and in terms which rank it among pagan superstitions. However, some traces of this custom are found for several ages after both in the Greek and the Latin church. On the consecration of a bishop, after laying the Bible upon his head, a ceremony still subsisted that the first verse which offered itself was accounted an omen of his future behavior, and of the good and evil which was reserved for him in the course of his episcopacy. Thus a bishop of Rochester, at his consecration by Lafranc, archbishop of Canterbury, had a very happy presage in these words: "Bring hither the best robe, and put it on him." But the answer of the scripture, at the consecration of St. Leitbert, bishop of Cambray, was still more grateful: "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." The death of Albert, bishop of Liege, is said to have been intimated to him by these words, which the archbishop who consecrated him found at the opening of the New Testament: "And the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought, and he went and beheaded him in the prison." On this, the primate, tenderly embracing the new bishop, said to him with tears, "My son, having given yourself up to the service of God, carry yourself righteously and devoutly, and prepare yourself for the trial of martyrdom." The bishop was afterwards murdered by the treacherous connivance of the emperor, Henry VI.

These prognostics were alleged on the most important occasions. De Garlande, bishop of Orleans, became so odious to the clergy, that they sent a complaint against him to pope Alexander III., concluding in this manner—"Let your apostolical hands put on strength to *strip naked* the iniquity of this man; that the curse prognosticated on the day of his consecration may overtake him: for the gospels being opened, according to custom, the first words were, 'and the young man, leaving his linen cloth, fled from them naked.'"

However ridiculous these accounts may appear, they are not more so than many other superstitions, such as fortune telling, the interpretation of dreams, &c., which obtain at the present day; but which, thanks to phi-

osophy, are doomed to give way to rational principles. Religion has hitherto formed a horrid and vicious state of society; but the folly is gradually wearing off, and it behoves every one to help in its extinction.
ZEN0.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 86.

Establishment of Christianity.—When the first Galileans spread themselves among the populace of the Greeks and Romans, they found this populace infected with all the absurd traditions that can take possession of ignorant minds enamored with fables. They had gods disguised in the shape of bulls, horses, swans, and serpents to seduce women and girls. Magistrates and respectable citizens did not admit of these extravagancies; but the populace fed on them, and these constituted the pagan mob. I fancy I see the followers of Fox dispute with those of Brown. It was not difficult for Jews, possessed with devils, to make their reveries believed by the ignorant, who believed other reveries equally impertinent. Novelty attracted weak minds, who grew tired of their old follies, and ran to hear new tales, just like the mob at Bartholomew fair, demanding a new farce, and becoming disgusted with the old one, which they have so often seen repeated.

If we believe the books of the Christians, we are told that Peter, son of Jonas, (Acts ix. 39,) dwelt with Simon the tanner, in a garret at Joppa, where he brought to life again the mantua maker, Dorcas. In the Chapter of Lucian, entitled *Philopatris*, he speaks of a Galilean, “with a bald forehead, and large nose, who was carried to the third heaven.” See how he speaks of an assembly of Christians, whom he fell in with: “Tatterdemalions almost naked, with fierce looks and the walk of madmen, who moan and make contortions; swearing by the Son who was begotten by the Father; predicting a thousand misfortunes to the empire; and cursing the emperor.” Such were the first Christians.

He who had given the greatest notoriety to this sect was this Paul with the large nose and bald forehead whom Lucian ridicules. The writings of Paul are sufficient to show how far Lucian was right. What nonsense he writes to the society of Christians forming at Rome among the Jewish rabble. “Circumcision verily profiteth if thou keep the law, but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. (Rom. ii. 25.) Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law. (Rom. iii. 31.) If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God.” (Rom. iv. 2.) In thus expressing himself, Paul spoke evidently as a Jew, and not as a Christian. What a discourse to the Corinthians, “Our fathers were all baptised unto Moses, in the cloud and in the sea.” (1 Cor. x. 1, 2.) Was not cardinal Bembo right in calling these epistles *Epistolacia* [Mean or worthless writings. Ed.] and advising people not to read them? What shall we think of a man who says to the Thessalonians, “Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak,” (1 Cor. xiv. 34,) and who in the same epistle announces that they ought to pray and prophesy with their heads covered? (1 Cor. xi. 5.)

Is his quarrel with the other apostles that of a wise and moderate man? Does not every thing show him to be a party man? He is a Christian : he teaches Christianity, and goes seven days successively to sacrifice in the temple of Jerusalem, by the advice of James. He writes to the Galatians, " Behold, I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing." (Gal. v. 2.) And he afterwards circumcises his disciple Timothy, who, as the Jews pretend, was the son of a Greek and a prostitute. He obtrudes himself among the apostles, and boasts of being as much an apostle as the rest of them : " Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ, our Lord? Are not ye my work in the Lord? If I be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. Have we not a power to eat and to drink? have we not a power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord? Who goeth to warfare any time at his own charges?" What frightful things in this passage! The right of living at the expense of those he has subjugated; the right of making them pay the expenses of his wife or his sister : and, at last, the proof that Jesus had brothers, and the presumption that Mary, or Mirja, was brought to bed more than once.

I should be glad to know of whom he is speaking again in his 2d Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xi. " For such are false apostles. Howbeit, wherein soever any is bold, I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they the ministers of Christ? I am more : in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prison more frequent, in deaths oft. Five times received I forty stripes, save one; thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; a night and a day I have been in the deep." Behold this Paul, who was twenty-four hours in the deep without being drowned! It is a third of the adventure of Jonah. But does he not here clearly manifest his base jealousy of Peter and the other apostles, by thinking to carry the palm from them, because he has received more stripes and floggings than they have done?

Does not his fury for domineering appear in all its insolence, when he says to the same Corinthians, " This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. Being now absent, I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that if I come again I will not spare." (2 Cor. xiii. 1, 2.) To what simple fools, to what kind of besotted creatures, did he thus address himself like a tyrannical master? Those to whom he had the hardihood to assert that he was carried to the third heaven. Impudent and dastardly impostor! Where is this third heaven in which thou hast travelled? Is it in Venus or in Mars? We laugh at Mahomet, when his commentators pretend that he visited seven heavens in succession, in a single night; but Mahomet, in the Alcoran at least, does not speak of such an extravagance as that which is imputed to him; yet Paul dares to assert that he has performed half of this journey.

Who was this Paul, then, who still makes so much noise, and who is every day quoted at random? He says he was a Roman citizen; which I dare affirm to be an impudent falsehood. No Jew was a Roman citizen, except under the Decii and Philips. If he were of Tarsus, it was neither a Roman city nor a Roman colony for more than a hundred

years after Paul. If he were a native of Giscalus, as St. Jerome states, this village was in Galilee, and, assuredly, the Galileans had never the honor of being Roman citizens. He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; that is, he was one of Gamaliel's domestics. Indeed, it is remarked, that he took care of the clothes of those who stoned Stephen, which is the employ of a valet. The Jews pretend that he wished to marry Gamaliel's daughter. We see some traces of this adventure in the ancient book which contains the history of Thecla.

It is not astonishing that the daughter of Gamaliel should reject a little bald headed valet, whose eyebrows hung over a deformed nose, and who was bandylegged. It is thus that the "Acts of Thecla" describe him. Disdained, as he deserved to be, by Gamaliel and his daughter, he joined himself with the infant sect of Cephas, James, Matthew, and Barnabas, in order to annoy the Jews. Any one, who has the least spark of reason, would judge that this cause, which has been assigned for the apostacy of this miserable Jew, is more natural than that attributed to him. How can we persuade ourselves that a celestial light knocked him off horseback at noonday; that a heavenly voice addressed him; that God said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Ought we not to blush at such stupidity? If God had wished to prevent the disciples of Jesus from being persecuted, would he not have addressed himself to the princes of the nation rather than to Gamaliel's valet? Have they met with less chastisement since Saul fell from his horse? Was not Saul, Paul himself, chastised? What was the utility of this ridiculous miracle? I call heaven and earth to witness, (if I may be permitted to make use of these improper words, heaven and earth,) that there never was a legend more stupid, more fanatical, more disgusting, nor more deserving of our horror and contempt.

Of the Gospels.—As soon as the societies of half Jews, half Christians, had by degrees established themselves among the ignorant people at Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, and Alexandria, some time after Vespasian, each of these little societies wished to make its own gospel. Fifty of them have been reckoned, and there were many more. It is known that they all contradict one another. This could not be otherwise, since they were all composed in different places. All of them agree that their Jesus was the son of Mary, or Mirja, and that he was put to death. All of them ascribe to him as many prodigies as are to be found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

Luke dresses up a genealogy for him quite different to that planned by Matthew; and neither of them dream of giving us the genealogy of Mary, who was his only parent. The enthusiast Pascal cries out, "This is not acting in concert." Undoubtedly not. Each has written extravagancies for his little society, according to his own fancy. This accounts for one evangelist pretending that the little Jesus was brought up in Egypt, and another saying that he was brought up at Bethlehem. One of them makes him go only *once* to Jerusalem, while the others say he went *three* times. One of them causes three wise men, whom they call three kings, to be conducted by a new star, and causes all the little children of the country to be put to death by the first Herod, who was then

near the end of his days. The others are silent about the star, and the wise men, and the massacre. (The massacre of the innocents is certainly the height of folly, as well as the tale of the three wise men conducted by a star. How could Herod, who was then almost on his death bed, fear being dethroned by the son of a village carpenter, who was just born. Herod died only two or three years after, at the age of seventy. It would have been necessary for this child to make war against the empire. Could such a fear take possession of any man, who was not an absolute fool? Is it possible that they have proposed to human credulity such stupid fooleries, which outdo Robert the Devil, and John of Paris? Man is a very contemptible being when he suffers himself to be governed in such a way!) At length, to explain these contradictions, we have been compelled to make a concordance, and this concordance is less concordant than the matters they wished to reconcile.

Almost all the gospels, which the Christians never made known but to their own little flocks, were visibly forged after the taking of Jerusalem. We have a very evident proof of it in that attributed to Matthew. This book puts into the mouth of Jesus these words to the Jews: "That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." A forger is always discovered in some part of his work. During the siege of Jerusalem, there was a Zacharias, son of Barachias, killed between the temple and the altar, by the faction of the zealots. This enables us easily to detect the imposition; otherwise we might have read over the whole Bible to enable us to do so. The Greeks and Romans read but little, and the gospels were entirely unknown to them. Lies were told with impunity.

An evident proof that the gospel attributed to Matthew, was not written till a long time after him by some miserable half Jew, half Christian Hellenist, is this famous passage: "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." (Matt. xviii. 17.) There was no church in the time of Jesus and of Matthew. Church is a Greek word. The assembly of the people of Athens styled itself *Ecclesia*. This expression was only adopted by the Christians in process of time, when they had obtained a kind of government. It is clear, then, that an impostor took the name of Matthew and wrote his gospel in very bad Greek. I confess it would be comical enough for Matthew, who had himself been a publican, to compare the heathens with publicans. But whoever might have been the author of this ridiculous comparison, none but a madcap among the most illiterate of the people would have looked upon a Roman knight, who was authorized to receive the imposts established by government, as a man that ought to be despised. The idea alone is destructive of all administration, and not only unworthy of a man whom God had inspired, but unworthy the lackey of an honest citizen.

There are two gospels of the infancy. The first relates, that a young beggar patted the little Jesus, his comrade, behind, and that the little Jesus immediately killed him. *Kai para kremei peson apeidonon*. At another time he made birds of clay, which flew away. His method of learning the alphabet was quite divine. Those tales are not more ridiculous than that of his being carried off by the devil; that of his trans-

figuration on Mount Tabor; that of the water changed into wine; and that of the devil being sent into a herd of swine. Thus this gospel of the infancy was long in veneration.

The second gospel of the infancy is not less curious. Mary, who was conducting her son into Egypt, met with some girls that were deploring the loss of their brother, who had been transformed into a mule. Mary and her little one did not fail to change the mule into its former shape of a man; but we do not know whether the miserable animal was any better for the change. As they proceeded on the road, the wandering family met with two robbers, one named Dumachus, the other Titus. Dumachus was for robbing the Virgin, and doing something still more scandalous; but Titus took Mary's part, and gave forty drachms to persuade him to let the family go, without doing them any injury. Jesus declared to the Holy Virgin, that Dumachus should be the wicked thief, and Titus the good thief; that they would one day be executed with him; that Titus should go into paradise, and Dumachus to the devil.

The gospel according to St. James, the elder brother of Jesus, or that of Peter Barjonas, a gospel known and boasted of by Tertullian and by Origen, was in still greater repute. It was called *Proto-Evangelion*, or First Gospel. It was perhaps the first which spoke of the new star, of the arrival of the wise men, and of the little children whom the first Herod ordered to be massacred. There is still a kind of gospel or acts of John, in which Jesus is said to have danced with his apostles the evening before he died; and the circumstance is rendered probable, as the Therapeutæ were really accustomed to dance in a ring; a ceremony that must be very pleasing to our heavenly Father.

Why does the most scrupulous Christian now laugh without remorse at all the gospels and acts which are no longer in the canon; and why does he not dare to laugh at those adopted by the church? They are nearly the same tales; but fanaticism adores in one name what appears the height of ridicule in another.

At length, four gospels are chosen; and the great reason for having that number, as stated by St. Irenæus, is, that there are only four cardinal points; that God is seated on cherubims, and that cherubims have four different shapes. St. Jerome, in his preface to Mark's gospel, adds to the four winds and four shaped animals, the four rings of the poles, on which the box called the ark was carried. Theophilus of Antioch proves that as Lazarus was dead only four days, we can consequently admit only four gospels; St. Cyprian proves the same thing by the four rivers that watered paradise. We must be very impious not to yield to such reasons as these.

However, previous to any preference being given to these four gospels, the fathers of the two first centuries scarcely ever quoted any except the gospels which are now styled apocryphal. This is an incontestible proof that our four gospels were not written by those to whom they are attributed. I wish they were so. I wish, for example, Luke had written that which goes under his name. I would say to Luke, "How darcest thou maintain that Jesus was born under the governorship of Cyreneus, or Quirinus, when it is attested that Quirinus was not governor of Syria till more than ten years afterwards? How hast thou the face to say, that

Augustus ordered all the world to be taxed, and that Mary went to Bethlehem for that purpose? A tax on all the world! What an expression! Thou hast heard that Augustus had a book which contained a detail of the forces of the empire, and its finances; but a tax on all the subjects of the empire is what he never could have thought of. Still less could he think of a tax on all the world. No writer, either Greek, Roman, or barbarian, has mentioned such an extravagance. Behold thee, then, convicted of a most enormous falsehood, and yet thy book must be respected!"

But who fabricated these four gospels? Is it not probable that they were written by Christian Hellenists, since the Old Testament is scarcely ever quoted, except from the Septant version, which was unknown in Judea? The apostles knew no more about the Greek language than Jesus did. How could they have quoted the Septant? Nothing but the miracle of Pentecost could teach Greek to ignorant Jews.

What a collection of contrarieties and falsehoods remains in these four gospels! Were there only one, it would suffice to show them to be works of ignorance. Did we find only the single tale given by Luke, that Jesus was born under the governorship of Cyreneus, when Augustus ordered all the world to be taxed, would not this falsehood alone cause us to throw away the book with contempt? In the first place, there never was such a taxation, and no author speaks of it. Secondly, Cyreneus was not governor of Syria till ten years after the epocha of the birth of Jesus. In the gospels there are almost as many errors as words, and thus it is they succeed with the people.

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1828.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible. By the Secretary.

LECTURE XIII.

In my last lecture on the inconsistencies, absurdities, and contradictions of the Bible, there was one feature in the story of Abraham, of which the time would not permit a full elucidation; but which, from its importance in the Jewish and Christian systems of theology, ought not to be lost sight of. The point I allude to, is the alleged *covenant* between the Deity and the "Father of the Faithful," and his posterity.

It must appear, at first sight, to every one accustomed to think, as a most extraordinary circumstance, that the Almighty, who is described as *infinite*, should have held *colloquial* intercourse with Abraham, or with any other being belonging to this limited globe of ours. The word *infinity* implies that which *cannot* be circumscribed. Hence, if God be infinite he can *not* be in one particular place at one particular time. Had God actually visited the spot where Abraham resided, and there in person entered into a covenant or agreement with him, God could not have been every where—nay, no where else at the same time.

In *person* he must have appeared to Abraham; in *person* he must have conversed with Abraham; in *person* he must have communicated the con-

ditions of the covenant to Abraham. Consequently God was there *personally*, and therefore, he was *nowhere else personally*. Hence God is a *finite* being. Now, all Christians maintain that God is *infinite*. Since, then, it is clear—first, that an infinite being cannot be circumscribed; secondly, that a being who appears personally to any one is a circumscribed being; and, thirdly, that God, if an infinite being, cannot appear personally to *any one*, in *any place*, at *any time*, it must follow that he never held colloquial intercourse with Abraham; and, consequently, that all that is said in the book of Genesis about his covenanting with God is a palpable fabrication.

But supposing this difficulty to be got over. Admitting, for the sake of illustration, that an infinite, almighty being, could so far divest himself of his perfections, as to condescend to enter into a bargain with the creatures he had made, it follows that the covenant which he and Abraham entered into only related to the decision of a question of human policy—namely, whether Abraham's descendants, by right of primogeniture, or immediate descent, should or should not invade and possess a country, which was held by a different people by right of prescription?

To adjust or settle this question, Moses, after his return from exile, proclaimed a decree, which he did not hesitate to issue in the name of "the Lord." This decree commanded the Israelites to pass over Jordan into the land of Canaan, and there destroy all the inhabitants. Always ambitious to inherit this land of plenty, and being an itinerant, unprincipled set, the Israelites readily obeyed their chieftain. It is not, however, said that a regular siege or pitched battle ensued, but only that the Israelites took possession of all the lands and houses occupied by the Canaanites, in virtue of the pretended covenant with God and Abraham. What murders, adulteries, rapes, thefts, and blasphemies followed this victory, we are not told. But that these, always concomitant tokens of "divine authority," signalized the event, we must of necessity admit.

According to Christian commentators, who echo the Old Testament legends and fables, "the supreme being selected one family from an idolatrous world; nursed it up by various acts of his providence into a great nation—communicated to that nation a knowledge of his holiness, justice, mercy, power, and wisdom—disseminated them at various times through every part of the earth, that they might be a '*leaven to leaven the whole lump*,' that they might assure all other nations of the existence of one supreme God, the creator and preserver of the world, the only proper object of adoration."

Strange things and doings these! What! the Deity select a family of idolaters from an idolatrous world—select an idolent faction—a blasphemous herd from an "idolatrous world"—nurse up a daring race of profligates, prostitutes, liars, swearers, and house breakers "by various acts of his providence," into a great nation—"communicated to that nation a knowledge of his holiness, justice, mercy, power, and wisdom;"—yet a nation always the most unholy, the most unjust, and the most unmerciful that ever appeared on the earth—a nation and a people, who, in their days of power, were powerful only to do evil, being neither attached to wisdom nor mindful of her precepts. However, we are assured they were disseminated, at various times, throughout every part of the earth,

that they might be a "leaven to leaven the whole lump"—that they might certify to all other nations the existence of one god; and certainly they have made *their god* manifest in all the countries they have visited. They have, by their base and perfidious dereliction from virtue, like other nations, denied the justice, the wisdom, and the goodness of the *true* God. They have leavened the lump in Europe, in parts of Asia, in America, and throughout portions of the African domains—a leaven which has proved sufficiently pungent—a leaven which has crumbled humanity into the powder of subtlety, and raised combustious furies from the silence of error—a leaven which has made usury the standard medium of wealth and of power. Usury! yes, my friends, as much practised, and as much countenanced in this our Christian land as in any of the most arbitrary empires of the globe; countenanced by your legislatures, on the exchange, and at our numerous banks. But the Jews, say our Christian teachers, were appointed to "leaven the whole lump."

Selected to be the oracles of divine truth, and of created excellence, the "chosen people" wandered to and fro; sometimes under the escort of a warlike legion—sometimes accompanied by arks and tables—sometimes inspired by priests and prophets; but all at times, and on all occasions, tumultuous, ungrateful, and wicked. Were these, then, the peculiar favorites of a righteous God? These the generation for whom Deity condescended to covenant with man? These the chosen people of a being whose essence is purity? Forbid it truth—forbid that man—reasonable man, should so far abandon his intellects, as to admit such gross absurdities.

But those interested in maintaining the Christian system, tell us that the destruction of the Canaanites is perfectly reconcilable to God's moral justice. According to the words put into the mouth of Noah, Canaan had offended in the person of Ham; and this offence, which consisted in Ham's informing his brethren that their father was drunk, could only be pardoned or obliterated in the total destruction of that people.

That Deity never gave such a command, may at once be inferred from those principles of natural law, of which he is considered the author. It is impossible that the actions of a set of men not more atrocious than their invaders, should incur the displeasure of a *just God*. Canaan may have been destroyed by natural causes. But these were not sought after by the Bible writers. Moses, if such a person ever existed, and who, perhaps, could not write his own name, has said that the Canaanites were destroyed by the Israelites. This was enough, for both Jews and Christians immediately concluded that God, whom they always exhibit as the prompter to Moses, had so ordered it. But does this leave a doubt about the incoherence of an assertion so totally vague and uncharacteristic—an assertion as unfounded in truth, as it is derogatory of the goodness and the supremacy of the Almighty.

In what is said, in the book of Genesis, about the casting out of Ismael, the son of Hagar, and the prosperity which was promised to Isaac and his descendants, there is a manifest departure from all rules of logic, and from truth. It was in Isaac that the race of the patriarch was blessed. Yet Isaac was father only of an unfortunate and contemptible nation, who for a long period were slaves, and have for a longer been dis-

persed over the earth. Ismael, on the contrary, was the father of the Arabs, who, in course of time, established the empire of the caliphs, one of the most powerful and extensive in the world.

In this, remarks Voltaire, "the posterity of Hagar's son Ismael, took ample revenge on the posterity of Sarah's son Isaac, in favor of whom he had been cast out. The Saracens, descending in a right line from Ismael, made themselves masters of Jerusalem, which belonged, by right of conquest, to the posterity of Isaac."

The same writer justly observes, as to the ungallant treatment of Hagar by Abraham, that he who is said to have been in possession of so many shepherds that with their assistance alone he defeated the armies of four great kings, should, at least, have given a small flock to Hagar when he sent her away in the desert. This same Voltaire, on whom the priesthood have heaped the vilest calumnies—whose memory has been, and still is, defamed by fanaticism—this friend of man, of whose character the most atrocious libels have been uttered, and of whose philanthropy the most daring falsehoods have been asserted by the abettors of an abominable superstition—when contemplating the treatment which the unfortunate Hagar received from the hard hearted individual, whom she had cherished in her bosom, and to whom she had borne a son, instead of using terms of reproach for an act which might have justified the severest censure, expresses himself in a language truly indicative of the goodness and fullness of his heart. "I would," says this great man, "have given my old companion Hagar a few sheep, a few goats, a few suits of clothes for herself and our son Ismael—a good she ass for the mother, and a pretty foal for the child—a camel to carry their baggage—and, at least, two servants to attend them, and prevent them from being devoured by wolves." Disinterestedness, like this, has no part in either the Jewish or Christian codes; the tendency of which is to obliterate all the natural feelings, and to render mankind selfish and cruel.

To be continued.

NASHOBA.

Explanatory Notes, respecting the Nature and Objects of the Institution of Nashoba, and of the Principles upon which it is founded. Addressed to the Friends of Human Improvement, in all Countries and of all Nations. By Frances Wright.

Continued from page 95.

The limits of the present address will not admit of a detailed defence of the principles, and explanation of the practice of cooperative labor. And, however great their advantages, the founder of Nashoba views them as entirely subordinate to the one great principle of human liberty which she believes them calculated to further and secure.

She sees in the cooperative system, as it has been termed, *the means, not the end*; but, after mature consideration of its theory, and some observation of its practice, believing it the best means yet discovered for securing the one great end—that of human liberty and equality; she has for that reason, and that reason, only, made it the base of the experiment at Nashoba.

The institution of Nashoba being thus founded on the broad basis of human liberty and equality, every provision made by the legal act of the founder, as well as the subsequent regulations of the trustees, are shaped in accordance with it. It will be seen by a reference to that public record, of which it is recommended to attach a copy to this address, that the personal independence of each individual member of the society is effectually secured, and that, without disputing the established laws of the country, the Institution recognizes only within its bosom the force of its own principles.

It is declared, in the deed of the founder, that no individual can be received as member, but after a noviciate of six months, and then only by a *unanimous* vote of the resident proprietors. It is also provided, that the admission of a husband shall not involve that of a wife, nor the admission of a wife that of a husband, nor the admission of either or both of the parents that of children *above the age of fourteen*. Each individual must pass through a separate trial, and be received or rejected on the strength of his or her merits or demerits. And, as in the reception of members the individual character is the only one recognized, so by the principle of the society that character can never be forfeited. The marriage law existing without the pale of the institution, is of no force within that pale. No woman can forfeit her individual rights or independent existence, and no man assert over her any rights or power whatsoever beyond what he may exercise over her free and voluntary affections. Nor, on the other hand, may any woman assert claims to the society or peculiar protection of any individual of the other sex, beyond what mutual inclination dictates and sanctions; while, to every individual member of either sex, is secured the protection and friendly aid of all.

The tyranny usurped by the matrimonial law, over the most sacred of the human affections, can perhaps only be equalled by that of the unjust public opinion, which so frequently stamps with infamy, or condemns to martyrdom, the best grounded and most generous attachments which ever did honor to the human heart, simply because unlegalized by human ceremonies equally idle and offensive in the form and mischievous in their tendency.

This tyranny, as now exercised over the strongest and at the same time, if refined by mental cultivation, the noblest of the human passions, had probably its source in religious prejudice or priestly rapacity; while it has found its plausible and more philosophical apology in the apparent dependance of children on the union of the parents. To this plea it might perhaps be replied, that the end, how important soever, is not secured by the means: that the forcible union of unsuitable and unsuited parents can little promote the happiness of the offspring; and that, supposing the protection of children to be the real source and object of our code of morals and of our matrimonial laws, what shall we say of the effects of these humane provisions on the fate and fortunes of one large family of helpless innocents, born into the world in spite of all prohibitions and persecutions, and whom a cruel law and yet more cruel opinion disown and stigmatize. But how wide a field does this topic embrace! how much cruelty; how much oppression of the weak and helpless does it not involve!

The children denominated illegitimate, or *natural*, (as if in contradistinction of others who should be out of Nature because under law,) may be multiplied to any number by an unprincipled father, easily exonerated by law and custom from the duties of paternity, while these duties and their accompanying shame are left to a mother but too often rendered desperate by misfortune! And should we follow out our review of the law of civilized countries, we shall find the offspring termed legitimate, with whom honor and power and possession are associated, adjudged, in case of matrimonial dissensions, to the father, who, by means of this legal claim, has not unfrequently bowed to servitude the spirit of a fond mother, and held her as a galley slave to the oar.

But it is not here that this subject can be discussed in all its bearings. The writer of this article will however challenge all the advocates of existing institutions, and existing opinions, to test them by the secret feelings of their own bosom, and then to pronounce on their justice. She will challenge them to consider the wide field of human society as now existing, to examine its practice and to weigh its theory, and to pronounce on the consistency of the one and the virtue of the other. She will challenge them to determine how many of the moral evils, and numerous family of physical diseases, which now torture the human species, have their source in the false opinions and vicious institutions, which have perverted the best source of human happiness—the intercourse of the sexes, into the deepest source of human misery. Let us look into our streets, our hospitals, our asylums; let us look into the secret thought of the anxious parent, trembling for the minds and bodies of sons starting into life, or mourning over the dying health of daughters condemned to the unnatural repression of feelings and desires inherent to their very organization, and necessary alike to their moral and physical well being.

Or let us look to the victims—not of pleasure—not of love—nor yet of their own depravity, but of those ignorant laws, ignorant prejudices, and of that ignorant code of morals, which condemn one portion of the female sex to vicious excess, another to as vicious restraint, and all to defenceless helplessness, and slavery; and generally the whole of the male sex to debasing licentiousness, if not to loathsome brutality.

And must we be told that “private vices are public benefits,” that the units of individual misery make the sum of the general good? or that the immolation of some and suffering of all are requisite to secure public order, and to moderate human population to the supplies yielded for its support. As if living creatures could ever for any space of time positively exceed the means of subsistence; or as if their tendency to increase beyond a healthy sufficiency of these means, could ever be repressed save by the increase and spread of real knowledge, which should teach human beings to consider the creation of other human beings as the most important of all actions; and the securing to the beings of their creation a sound and healthy organization and equally a sound and healthy education with all the means of a happy existence, as the most important of all duties. In the moral, intellectual, and physical cultivation of both sexes, should we seek, as we can only find, the source and security of human happiness and human virtue. Prejudice and fear are weak barriers against passions which, inherent in our nature and demanding only ju-

icious training to form the ornament and supply the best joys of our existence, are maddened into violence by pernicious example and pernicious restraint, varied with as pernicious indulgence. Let us correct our views of right and wrong, correct our moral lessons, and so correct the practice of rising generations! Let us not teach, that virtue consists in the crucifying the affections and appetites, but in their judicious government! Let us not attach ideas of purity to monastic chastity, impossible to man or woman without consequences fraught with evil, nor ideas of vice to connections formed under the auspices of kind feeling! Let us inquire, not if a mother be a wife, or a father a husband, but if parents can supply, to the creatures they have brought into being, all things requisite to make existence a blessing. Let the force of public opinion be brought against the thoughtless ignorance or cruel selfishness which, either with or without the sanction of a legal or religious permit, so frequently multiplies offspring beyond the resources of the parents. Let us check the force of passions, as well as their precocity, not by the idle terror of imaginary crime in the desire itself, but by the just and benevolent apprehension of bringing into existence unhappy or imperfect beings! Let us teach the young mind to reason, and the young heart to feel; and, instead of shrouding our own bodies, wants, desires, senses, affections, and faculties in mystery, let us court inquiry, and show, that acquaintance with our own nature can alone guide us to judicious practice, *and that in the consequence of human actions exists the only true test of their virtue or their vice.*

We need only to observe the effects of the present system to be convinced of its error. When is the repressive force of public opinion perceived? Whom does it affright? The poor, the ignorant, the unhappy pauper, the diseased profligate, the licentious hypocrite? Is it they who feel the force either of just or unjust censure; or who hesitate to call into existence sentient beings, born to ignorance, want, or disease? No! is it not rather upon that class whose feelings and intellects have been most cultivated, and who consequently are best fitted to give life to a healthy and intellectual race, upon whom the weight of coercive prejudice falls?

Let us advert to the far more important half of the human species (whether we consider their share in the first formation and rearing the infant, or their moral influence on society.) Let us consider the effects of existing institutions and opinions as exemplified among women. In what class do we find the largest number of childless females and devoted victims to unnatural restraints? Certainly among the cultivated, talented, and independent women who (in England more especially) shrink equally from the servitude of matrimony, and from the opprobrium stamped on unlegalized connexions.

But again, the writer of this address must observe, that she can here only touch upon subjects, which she feels herself prepared to examine in detail; but which she must defer until a suitable medium be supplied in the periodical publication, which it will be the object of the society to issue, as soon as it can be done consistently with its interests.

It is considered that the peculiar object of the founder, "The benefit of the negro race," may best be consulted by the admission and incorporation of suitable individuals of that, and the mixed race, on the same

principles of equality which guide the admission of all members; and farther, that such individuals may best be found among the *free citizens of color*, who form no inconsiderable and frequently a very respectable body in the American population, more especially in that of the southern cities.

As it was the object of the founder to attempt the peaceful influence of example, and silently to correct the practice and reach the laws through the feelings and the reason of the American people, she carefully forebore outraging any of the legal provisions in the slave state in which she ventured to attempt her experiment, or those of any of the slave states with which she is acquainted, and trusted confidently to the national good sense, and to the liberality fostered by the national institutions, for the safety of any experiment however exposed to the national prejudices, which should be undertaken in a spirit of kindness to all men, and conducted within the limits of private, or, as in the present case, of *associate property*.

It is not supposed that (with some rare exceptions) human beings raised under the benumbing influence of brutal slavery can be elevated to the level of a society based upon the principles of moral liberty and voluntary cooperation. The experiment, therefore, as respects *slave* population, it is intended to limit, at Nashoba, to the first purchase of the founder, excepting in cases where planters, becoming members, may wish to place their negroes under the protection of the institution. And looking to effect the more especial object of the institution through the present free race of color, and more especially by the education of colored children, the founder judged that she should best conciliate the laws of the southern states, and the popular feelings of the whole Union, as well as the interests of the emancipated negro, by providing for the colonization of all the slaves emancipated by the society, in a free country, without the limits of the United States. Personal observation had taught her the danger of launching a freed slave into the midst of an inimical population. And if unfit, as he must of necessity be, for incorporation into the society as a free proprietor, it appeared consistent with justice and humanity to enjoin his being sent to a country of safety for his color, when ejected from the protection of the institution.

While occupied, as they fondly hope, in paving the way for the moral regeneration of American citizens of color, the trustees of Nashoba believe that *slavery* may safely be left to work its own ruin. The falling price of cotton must soon reduce to zero the profits of the upland planter, and fortunately the growth of sugar is restricted by climate to a small portion of the American slave territory. But when the bankrupt fortunes of the southern planters shall have put an end to the *internal slave trade* of the United States, and Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky, the *Guinea* of the states farther south, shall have lost their last staple *commodity of profit*, the principles avowed in this paper may attract the national attention, and the olive of peace and brotherhood be embraced by the white man and the black; and their children, approached in feeling and education, gradually blend into one their blood and their hue.

The writer of this address is fully aware that the topic most offensive to the American public is that now under consideration. But so, to that

public is it more peculiarly addressed; not, it will be believed, with a view to offend, but with the single view of exposing the principles of Nashoba to the American people, and calling their attention to the cool investigation of a subject unhappily seldom approached but with the anger of sectional or the pride of national feeling.

The strength of the prejudice of color, as existing in the United States and in the European colonies, can in general be little conceived, and less understood in the old continent; yet, however whimsical it may there appear, is it, in fact, more ridiculous than the European prejudice of birth! The superior excellence which the one supposes in a peculiar descent, or merely in a peculiar name, the other imagines in a peculiar complexion or set of features; and perhaps it is only by considering man in many countries, and observing all his varying and contradictory prejudices, that we can discover the equal absurdity of all.

Those to whom the American institutions and American character are familiar, and who have considered the question of negro slavery in all its bearings, will probably be disposed to pronounce, with the writer of this address, that the emancipation of the colored population cannot be *progressive through the laws*. It must, and can only be *progressive through the feelings*; and, through that medium, be finally complete and entire, involving at once political equality and the amalgamation of the races.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 9th March, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued, at half past 2 o'clock.

Free Enquirers.—A lecture will be delivered in the Military Hall, corner of Sixth avenue and Fourth street, Greenwich, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 9th March, at 3 o'clock P. M.

THE CORRESPONDENT

Is published at No. 15 Chamber street, New York, (where communications are to be addressed.) Terms three dollars per annum, payable in advance.

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George H. Evans, Printer, No. 264 Greenwich street, New York.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 8.

NEW YORK, MARCH 15, 1828.

Vol. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION.

Mr. Editor—As you are the bold and undaunted advocate of free inquiry, you will doubtless rejoice with me at a recent triumph obtained over a combined and systematic attack on civil and religious liberty. I am sorry that my want of time and health will not permit me to give you a detailed account of this affair: perhaps some of our friends in this city will do it. In the mean time, I will give you some little information, by which, and the speech of Mr. Powel, of the senate of Pennsylvania, you will be able to form some idea of the matter.

The "Sunday School Union" is a school so called from a union of the *orthodox* schools, not only in this city, but, principally, throughout the United States, under one system and government. It has become very rich and powerful, and may be considered the twin sister of the "Tract Society" in your city. Some of the managers are respectable and influential, while others are as subservient to the priesthood as men can be. How far the clergy act a part in the institution you will perceive by Mr. Powel's speech, which is such as cannot fail to render the meed of praise due to the orator from every one opposed to a union of "*church and state*." The Sunday School Union having become rich and powerful, wanted to become more so: accordingly, its supporters applied to the legislature for a charter. Their petition was numerously signed. Every priest exerted his influence over his congregation, and every influential advocate of the institution exerted his over his dependants. Nor is it improbable that the petition contained a great number of infantile signatures; or, rather, signatures by proxy.

The advocates of the Sunday School Union in the legislature represented the institution as being entirely under the direction and control of the laity, and free from sectarian and proscriptive feelings. But Messrs. Burden and Powel showed that the reverse was the case. The friends of liberal principles sent a remonstrance to the legislature against the passage of the bill, showing the evils likely to result from the adoption of such a measure. The consequence was, that the bill was indefinitely postponed; two thirds of the members voting against it.

As this is a miscellaneous letter, permit me to notice your remarks on "Sunday" in the 5th number of the present volume of the *Correspondent*. You say that "a great many of the crimes which are committed in this country have their origin in the idleness to which our laborers and mechanics are compelled to submit upon a Sunday." "He (the mechanic) feels a languor and listlessness which he cannot overcome," &c.

This "listlessness and languor," of which you complain, arises from fatigue, produced by excessive labor; and this is produced by extensive machinery, and the misdirection of the arts and sciences. When people are employed from getting out of bed to going into it, with no time to read, or converse, and scarcely time to eat their victuals, they may well feel a "listlessness and languor" when Sunday comes. I am perfectly satisfied that one day in seven, (I wish it was one day in four,) as a day of rest, is a good institution; [I do not know nor care who was the author of it;] for if there were no such day, it is highly probable the working man would be more emaciated than he is, with no additional compensation; and to his "listlessness and languor" would be added bad health and filthiness from breathing impure air, and a total ignorance of his rights and duties, except serving his employer. Give people time to read and converse, then they will acquire information, become healthier, and (under a free constitution like ours) wiser and better members of society.

I have just read "A Critical Review of the Life, Character, Miracles, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, in a series of letters to Dr. Adam Clarke. By John Clarke, late of the Methodist Connexion," and am confident that no subscriber of the *Correspondent*, were he acquainted with the merits of the book, and had the means to purchase, would be without it. It is the best book on the subject that I have read. The author having been a *preacher*, has, doubtless, made him acquainted with all the texts of the Bible, which he does not fail to apply appropriately to the subject. Will you be so good as to inform me if a copy can be had in New York, and, if so, what is its price?

Philadelphia, March 2, 1828.

JULIAN.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 104.

Conduct of the first Christians.—People of common sense ask how this tissue of fables, so stupidly offensive to reason; these blasphemies, which impute so many horrid crimes to the Deity, could obtain any credit. They might, indeed, have been astonished if the first Christians had converted the emperor's court, or the Roman senate; but an abject mob addressed itself to a populace not less despicable. This is so true, that the emperor Julian said in his Discourse to the Christians, "It was enough for you at first to seduce a few servants, a few beggars, such as Cornelius and Sergius." But let me be regarded as the most impudent of impostors, if among those who embraced your sect under Tiberius and Claudius, there was a single man of birth or merit."

The first reasoning Christians, then, exclaimed in the public places and victualling houses, to the pagans who attempted to reason with them. "Be not startled with our mysteries; you have recourse to expiations to purge yourselves of your crimes; but we have an expiation far more salutary. Your oracles are inferior to ours; and what we offer as a proof to convince you that our sect is the only true one, is, that your own oracles have predicted all that we teach, and all that was done by our Lord Jesus Christ. Have you not heard of the Sibyls?" "Yes," replied the pagan disputants to those of Galilee, "all the Sibyls were in-

spired by Jupiter himself: their predictions are all true." "Very well," replied the Galileans, "we will show you Sibylline verses which clearly announce Jesus Christ, and then you must acknowledge we are right."

Behold them immediately forging the most stupid Greek verses that were ever composed; verses similar to those of Blackmore and Gibson, of Grub street. They ascribe them to the Sibyls, and for the space of more than four hundred years they did not cease to establish Christianity on this proof, which was on a level with the understandings of both the deceivers and the deceived. This first attempt having succeeded, we even find these puerile impostors attributing to the Sibyls acrostic verses, all of which commenced by the letters composing the name of Jesus Christ.

Lactantius has preserved, as authentic pieces, a great portion of these rhapsodies. To these fables they added miracles, which they sometimes performed even in public. It is true, that they did not raise the dead, like Elisha; (2 Kings, iv. 32;) they did not arrest the sun in its course, like Joshua; they did not cross the sea dry shod, like Moses; they did not, like Jesus, cause themselves to be transported by the devil to the top of a little mountain in Galilee, where they could discover all the kingdoms of the earth: but they cured the fever when on its decline, and even the itch as soon as the patient had been bathed, blooded, purged, and rubbed. They, likewise, cast out devils, which was the principal object of the apostles' mission. It is said, in more than one gospel, that Jesus sent them purposely to cast out devils. This was an ancient prerogative of God's people. We know that there were exorcists at Jerusalem, who cured the possessed by putting into their noses a little of the root called Baruth, and by muttering a few words taken from Solomon's Song. Jesus himself confesses that the Jews had this power; (Matt. xii. 27;) yet no devils ever durst take possession of the governor of a province, of a senator, nor even of a centurion. None but the poor were ever possessed by them. If the devil ought to have seized hold of any particular individual, it should have been Pilate, yet he never durst approach him. Although the Christian sect was in reality established by this custom, yet it is almost every where abolished, except in states obedient to the pope, and in some of the German cantons, where the ignorant people are unfortunately in subjection to bishops and monks.

Thus the Christians gained credit among the ignorant people during a whole century. The government let them alone, regarding them as a Jewish sect, and the Jews were tolerated. They persecuted neither pharisees, nor sadducees, nor the Therapeutæ, nor Essenians, nor Judaites; and they had a still greater reason to permit the Christians to creep on in their ignorance, that of their being unknown. They were so little thought of, that neither Josephus, nor Philo, nor Plutarch, deigns to speak of them; and if Tacitus says a few words respecting them, it is by confounding them with the Jews, and stigmatizing them in the most contemptible manner. They possessed, therefore, the greatest facility of extending their sect. They were a little inquired after under Domitian; some of them were punished under Trajan, and it was then that they began to unite a thousand false accounts of martyrs, to some others that were but too true.

The Christians' Explanation of the Prophecies.—The Christians could never succeed so well among the Jews as they did among the populace of the Gentiles. So long as they continued to live according to the Mosaic law, which Jesus had observed all his lifetime; so long as they abstained from meats pretended to be impure, and did not proscribe circumcision, they were regarded only as a particular society of the Jews, such as the sadducees, Essenians, and Therapeutæ. They said that it was wrong to put Jesus to death; that he was a holy man sent by God, and that he had risen again from the dead.

These discoveries, it is true, were punished at Jerusalem: it is said that they cost Stephen his life, but otherwise this division produced only altercations between the rigid Jews and half Christians. They disputed; and the Christians fancied that they had found in the scriptures some passages that might be twisted in favor of their cause. They pretended that the Jewish prophets had predicted Jesus Christ, and quoted Isaiah, who said to king Ahaz, (Isaiah vii,) "Behold, a virgin (or a young woman, ALMA*) shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. In the same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head and the hair of the feet; and it shall also consume the beard."

Chap. viii. "Moreover, the Lord said unto me, take thee a great roll, and write in it with a man's pen, concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz. And I went unto the prophetess, and she conceived, and bare a son. Then said the Lord to me, call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz," which signifies, "divide quickly the spoils." "You see clearly," said the Christians, "that the whole of this evidently signifies the coming of Jesus Christ. The young woman who has a child is the Virgin Mary. 'Immanuel,' and 'Divide quickly the spoils,' signify our Lord Jesus Christ. As for the razor 'that is hired to shave the hair of the king of Assyria,' that is another matter." All these explanations perfectly resemble those of lord Peter, in Dean Swift's Tale of a Tub.

The Jews answered, "We do not see so clearly as you do, that 'Divide quickly the spoils,' and 'Immanuel,' signify Jesus; that Isaiah's young woman is a virgin; nor that *alma*, which is equally expressive both of girl and young woman, signifies Mary." And they laughed in the faces of the Christians.

When the Christians said that Jesus is predicted by the patriarch Judah, who was to "bind his foal unto the vine, and wash his garments in wine," (Gen. xlix. 11,) and Jesus having entered Jerusalem on an ass, then Judah is a type of Jesus. This made the Jews to laugh still more.

* By what fraudulent impudence have the Christians maintained that ALMA always signifies a virgin? There are in the Old Testament twenty passages, where *alma* is taken for a woman, and even for a concubine, as in Solomon's Song, chap. vi., and Joel, chap. i. Till the time of abbe Tuheme, none of the doctors of the church knew Hebrew, except Origen, Jerome, and Ephraim, who were brought up in the country.

If they pretended that Jesus was the Shiloh who was to come before the sceptre had departed from Judah, (Gen. xlix. 10.) the Jews confounded them by saying, that since the Babylonish captivity, the sceptre had never been in Judah, and that even during the time of Saul, the rod was not in Judah. Thus the Christians, far from being able to convert the Jews, were despised and detested by them, and are so still. They were looked upon as bastards, who, under false titles, wished to strip the heir of his possession. They then renounced the hope of converting the Jews to their cause, and addressed themselves wholly to the Gentiles.

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 15, 1828.

Triumphs of Liberal Principles.—On the first page of this number, we have published a communication from our correspondent "Julian," containing the highly gratifying intelligence of a complete defeat, sustained by the enemies of liberal principles, in a late attempt to induce the legislature of Pennsylvania to incorporate the "Sunday School Union." We could have wished to have quoted at length the able speech of Mr. Powel, mentioned by our correspondent, which, we have no doubt, powerfully influenced the rejection of the bill introduced by the clergy for an extension of their ecclesiastical domination; but its great length precludes our giving more than a few extracts. In opposing the contemplated measure, Mr. P. set out by accusing its projectors of "a systematic effort, to boldly assume the despotism of 'dictators,'—daringly avowing as their object, the exclusion from 'all the political power of the country,' of all men whose consciences have been warped—whose character has not been formed, whose devotion has not been secured by their system of education—their rites of 'baptism'—their modes of worship—their notions of the trinity and of transubstantiation promulgated by certain blind zealots, who would make all men and all doctrines subservient to an established 'orthodox' creed."

After showing, by extracts from their own publications, that he was fully justified in charging them with machinations to establish a paramount ecclesiastical jurisdiction, Mr. Powel concluded his appeal to the good sense of the senate in the following impressive manner:

"It is to the casuistical workings of priestcraft—the ceaseless efforts of misguided men, whose brains, inflamed by any passion, would make them humble and willing tools, prepared either to act as decorated pageants in the grand army, as it is called, in a crusade for political power, or to submit as ejaculating martyrs at the stake, to satisfy the vengeance of religious bigotry and mad zeal. This is strong language, but, sir, have we not been told that 'all the political power in the country within ten or twenty years shall be in the hands of persons whose characters have been formed at Sunday schools'—formed under the direction of those who can force out of circulation that which they do not approve—of those who boldly assert that they will force into use that which they have mutilated, and have adapted to their own ends—of those who daringly declare that they are dictators to the consciences of thousands of

immortal beings—of those whose organ utters anathemas from the house of God, calling on his followers to form a 'Christian party in politics,' to be supported by half a million of followers—to establish ecclesiastical domination—the rites of baptism—the orthodox faith throughout the land.

"Such consequences are not to be apprehended within our day, but, sir, they are to be apprehended, if we believe the predictions of the pious gentleman, and if we regard the prayer of the petitioners asking a charter, and the bill which they have prepared for our file, authorizing them 'forever hereafter to hold all and all manner of lands, tenements, and hereditaments,' without limitation of time or capital, but merely acquiescing in the limitation of monied income, not to exceed ten thousand dollars per year.

"We are told that no sectarian feeling can operate in the board of managers—that all persons may become contributors—may be made voters, and that no man is disqualified by his religious sentiments from participation in their concerns. Let it be admitted that there is no test at this time in force. But, has not their reporter—the accomplished and frank expounder of their views, the reverend gentleman told us, from the pulpit, in the house of God, that he would marshal his forces,—that he would call on half a million of followers to proscribe, exclude from the highest to the lowest civil offices, those who had not been 'baptized'—who are not orthodox in their faith—'those who are not presbyterians.' Can it be believed that this gentleman, whose character stands so deservedly high for steadiness of purpose, would say that which he did not mean to be seriously received, that, having said it, he would not act upon it, or that he acting upon it would disregard the means which we have been told would in ten years give effect to the great end? Would he not, in his pious endeavors to do that which he conscientiously thinks right, forbear to apply his eloquence? Would he not marshal his forces to exclude from the list of agents, if not from the board of managers, all those whose creed, whose purpose, and whose objects were not consistent with his own?

"But, sir, how is the fact? A reverend has already been employed with a large salary to 'take the field,' a missionary fund has been established, collected from the auxiliary schools connected with the vast machine. A grand system of proselytism has been formed—rules are given for the modes of attack upon the old and the young—'the hour of affliction, the moments of despair,' are pointed out as fit occasions to grasp the victims of sectarian zeal.

"I shall be forgiven, I trust, by them, if, in obedience to my oath to support the constitution, I oppose a deliberate plan to exclude, in ten or twenty years, any set of men, whether educated or uneducated, whether 'orthodox' or heterodox, from the political power of the country; a plan avowedly to operate in destroying the freedom of the press—in fact to establish ecclesiastical domination throughout the land."

Decisive as has been the triumph in Pennsylvania over bigotry and fanaticism, it is not the only instance we have to record of the clergy having been defeated in their attempts to establish ecclesiastical jurisdiction. During the present session of the Massachusetts legislature, a bill

was introduced to authorize the ecclesiastical courts in that state to *compel* the attendance of witnesses in their church proceedings. It was referred to a committee, who promptly reported that it was inexpedient to take any notice of the application. In this attempt to extend their influence, observes a correspondent, is to be "seen the serpentine tail of priestcraft. The head has been most severely bruised by the government since it has become republican. Ere long, the seed of Massachusetts, men and women, shall so effectually crush the serpent, that not a vestige of him will be discovered in our legislative assembly. Although tracts are flying about, and Sunday schools, like an epidemic, spreading in every quarter, one number of the *Correspondent* will have more influence in the world than a million of these ephemeral productions, which, so far from being read, are every where applied to the vilest purposes. The most influential and well informed, laymen begin to perceive the direful effects of the Bible, missionary, and tract societies—convinced that there has been already a profuse waste of blood and treasure to establish our national independence, they are prepared to burst the shackles of priestcraft asunder, and to free the human mind from the prejudices of education."

Orthodox Line of Stages.—The priesthood having been baffled in all their attempts to enforce by legislative enactments what they call a proper observance of Sunday, and having also failed in their endeavors to create an excitement in the public mind favorable to their views, have resorted to the singular method of establishing an "*orthodox line of stages*," for the avowed purpose of *coercing* those now engaged in running stages betwixt Albany and Buffalo, into a compliance with their measures. To effect this, it appears that a "Sabbath convention," composed of clergymen alone, was held in the village of Auburn on the 12th ultimo, and, after deliberating for two days, (or, as the report of the proceedings has it, "*prayerfully* deliberated on the object of the meeting,") an address and a set of resolutions were agreed to, which afterwards appeared in a religious paper published in Auburn. As this subject may afterwards give rise to some discussion, and as it is proper that the names of those engaged in this nefarious proceeding should be generally known, we now give publicity to the resolutions, and to some pertinent remarks on their tendency from the pen of the editor of the "*Gospel Advocate*:"

Resolved, That this convention view with peculiar gratitude and joy the many evidences before us that the feelings of this community are opposed to the profanation of the holy Sabbath, by the running of stages on that day.

Resolved, That we feel called upon by a voice from every part of the state, to adopt measures calculated to secure obedience to the fourth commandment.

Therefore Resolved, That John T. Norton, of Albany; Jonathan Crane, Schenectady; Elizur Goodrich, Abraham Varick, Edward Vernon, Utica; William Brown, Auburn; William Tillman, Geneva; Henry W. Taylor, Walter Hubbell, Canandaigua; Arristarchus Champion, William Atkinson, Josiah Bissel, Jr. Rochester; Thaddeus Joy, Buffalo, be, and they are hereby appointed commissioners to establish a line or lines of stages between Albany and Buffalo and Niagara, that shall not travel on the Sabbath.

Resolved, That we, as members of this convention, and for ourselves as individuals, pledge our patronage and support in favor of the said line or lines of stages, when put into operation, and that we will give our influence and exertions to promote this moral enterprise.

Resolved, That the proceedings of this convention be signed by all the members present, and that the editors of papers in this state friendly to the Sabbath be requested to publish the same.

ELIHU EWERS, Chairman.

SPENCER KELLOGG, Secretary.

M. C. Reed,
Edward Vermon,
Jn. Sloane, jr.,
Perez Hastings,
Ira Gould,

Amaziah How,
Seth Hastings,
Richard Steel,
Josiah Bissell, jr.,
Israel Huntington,

Artemus Stone,
Ephraim Scovell,
John Perine,
E. Dean,
Lyman Grandy,

Theodore Spencer,
Edson Carr,
Hiel Warner,
William Brown,
Henry Bradley.

After finishing the above proceedings respecting the stages, the following measures were adopted relative to the packet and freight boats on the Erie Canal, and steam boats on the rivers :

Resolved, that no ordinary circumstances shall induce us to travel in packet boats which violate the holy Sabbath, when the proposed line of stages shall have been established.

Resolved, That we will concur with the friends of religion and morality in New York, Albany, and Troy, in all proper measures for encouraging steam boats on the Hudson river which shall not run on the Sabbath day.

Resolved, That the convention highly approve of the efforts recently originated in Rochester to check the violation of the Sabbath on the Erie Canal ; and that we pledge ourselves as citizens and men of business, to give our patronage to such men as do not permit their boats to run on the Sabbath.

In behalf of the convention.

ELIHU EWERS, Chairman.

SPENCER KELLOGG, Secretary.

From the Gospel Advocate.

"We feel no inclination to find fault, without a cause, with the proceedings of our orthodox stage proprietors ; but so long as we have any interest in the peace of the state in which we live, or any desire for the perpetuity of our free institutions, we must be allowed to express an opinion of the motives by which such men are governed. When ministers leave the sacred desk, and meddle with the rights of the people ; when they insult the dignity of our laws ; when they assume the power to dictate, or adopt measures to coerce the public ; or when, as in this case, they become stage proprietors, and "runners" for a "piety line," then, we conclude, it is time to speak, and to speak plainly.

"The first thing which strikes our attention in the minutes of their proceedings, is the peculiar adroitness with which the members of the convention have appropriated to themselves, and the friends of the measure, all that is good, moral, and holy. 'Every enlightened man, and every true friend of his country,' they suppose, considers the evil they have undertaken to avert, 'as of great magnitude.' They would even seem to convey the idea, that every man who does not fall in with their views, is a traitor to his country, and an enemy to all that is good in the universe of God. This should be taken as the specimen of the charity, modesty, and piety of the convention. But notwithstanding they have, or would desire the public to think they have, a warm regard for the best interests of community, they hesitate not in violation of the first principles of morality to resolve, that 'as individuals, and members of the convention,' they pledge themselves to support the orthodox line of stages, to the detriment of all who will not or cannot conscientiously fall in with their measures ! So much for their modesty.

"Next we will notice the means they have resorted to, with a view to make the measure go down. They first give us to understand that the existence and prosperity of our government depend on their holy interference in its behalf. The 'spreading evil of Sabbath breaking, unless counteracted by some efficient plan, will speedily' [hear!] 'involve our country in ruin !' Now, reader, look back upon the 'times which tried men's souls,' and see if the orthodox clergy saved our country from ruin. Look at Massachusetts during the late war. Were the presbyterian clergy and their satellites then engaged in vindicating the rights of the people ? How happens

it, then, that *now* they have become so remarkably zealous for our liberties! Be assured that their professions are mere empty sounds. They have ever been the enemies of toleration, from the time when John Calvin burned Servetus, down to the present, as all history and experience will testify. No; their object is to obtain an influence over the public mind, which, as yet, the people have concurred in denying them; and this is an artifice to which they are compelled to resort, to sustain a sinking cause! Witness other means adopted by these pretended friends of God and our country. The person whose name stands at the head of the list, as we are credibly informed, in trying to gain over a respectable innkeeper in this village to the holy enterprize, assured him that it would be for his *pecuniary advantage* to encourage the plan, as the passengers would be compelled to tarry with him over the Sabbath! Indeed, no means, however pitiful, have been left untried to wheedle the public into an approbation of the measure. And yet, these humble souls are disposed to insult community with a profession of zeal for God, and regard for our country! This brings to mind the fable of the toad who turned physician, and professed the art of removing all protuberances from the flesh of his brethren, while himself was sorely afflicted with the same complaint. Let those physicians heal themselves.

"But aside from all this, it is calculated to excite a smile to contemplate the scheme when it shall be carried into effect. They may obtain pious drivers, (as there are many well qualified for the business out of employ,) and orthodox stages, we understand, can be procured, ere long, in Boston; and orthodox runners may be obtained from among the clergy; but it will be difficult to procure orthodox horses! Now don't accuse us, reader, of trifling with sacred things—we are speaking of a *new line of stages*, and stages have never before been sanctified.

"But why, it may be asked, have the presbyterians entered into such a speculation?—Answer: they have long thirsted for *power*; they have attempted to obtain it by application to the legislature, but have failed. They see and know that liberal principles are fast gaining ground, and as a last resort, they have adopted the measure under consideration. Every effort they have made, has but accelerated their downfall; and they are now adopting measures to obtain the ascendancy. If they fail in this, as we confidently expect they will, they will be compelled to yield to the regularly constituted authorities of the government; but if they succeed, it will but embolden them to commit greater outrages upon the freedom of our citizens.

"It will be recollected by many of our readers, that, a few years since, an attempt was made by the superintendent of common schools to introduce officially the pernicious tracts of the presbyterians. The attempt was justly construed into an insult against the good sense of the people, and resulted in the removal of Mr. Yates from that office, which, by that act, he had abused. Subsequently, an attempt was made to obtain the passage of a law to compel the observance of the Sabbath. In this they also failed. Finding the legislature of the state, and all enlightened people, against them, they have resorted to the plan above noticed. It remains for the *people* to do their duty, and these holy conspirators will fail in this also."

NASHOBA.

Explanatory Notes, respecting the Nature and Objects of the Institution of Nashoba, and of the Principles upon which it is founded. Addressed to the Friends of Human Improvement, in all Countries and of all Nations. By Frances Wright.

Continued from page 112.

And has Nature (as slave apologists would tell us) drawn a Rubicon between the human varieties of physiognomy and complexion, or need we enter into details to prove that no *natural antipathy* blinds the white Louisianian to the charms of the graceful Quadroon—however the force of prejudice or the fear of public censure makes of her his mistress, and of the whiter skinned, but often not more accomplished or more attractive female, his wife? Or must we point to the intercourse in its most degraded forms, where the child is the marketable slave of its father? Idle indeed is the assertion that the mixture of the races is not in Nature. If not in Nature, it could not exist; and, being in Nature, since it does happen, the only question is whether it shall take place in good taste and good feeling, and be made at once the means of sealing the tranquillity and of perfecting the liberty of the country, and of peopling it with a race more suited to its southern climate than the pure European,—or whether it shall proceed, as it now does, viciously and degradingly, mingling hatred and fear with the ties of blood—denied, indeed, but stamped by Nature herself upon the skin. The education of the race of color would doubtless make the amalgamation more rapid as well as more creditable; and so far from considering the physical amalgamation of the two colors, when accompanied by a moral approximation, as an evil, it must surely be viewed as a good equally desirable for both. In this belief, the more especial object of the founder of Nashoba is to raise the man of color to the level of the white. Where fitted by habits of industry and suitable dispositions to receive him as a brother and equal, and, after due trial, as proprietor trustee of the property; to educate his children with white children, and thus approaching their minds, tastes and occupations, to leave the affections of future generations to the dictates of free choice.

It may be necessary to advert to one provision of the deed of trust, which establishes a difference between trustees and associates, and fixes a period (fifty years from the date of the gift of the property) when the distinction shall cease, and every proprietor possess the full character of trustee.

The founder being greatly anxious that the principles of moral and intellectual liberty, consecrated in her deed, should be preserved pure in practice as in principle, and that its more especial object—the protection and regeneration of the race of color, should never be lost sight of, so long as the oppression of the race shall find a sanction in the laws, or in the feelings of the more numerous population, she was desirous of confining the moral trust of the institution within very special limits. And yet at the same time believing that many individuals might constitute useful and happy members of the institution, whose intellectual faculties or moral courage might not be of that strength as to render them safe guardians of the principles, in practice, at least, so novel, or of the peculiar interests

of a proscribed race, she judged it a less evil to admit of a distinction in the powers, not the rights, of future proprietors, than to restrict too scrupulously their number, or to endanger the great moral objects of the institution itself.

The duration of such a distinction was limited to fifty years, in the belief that before that period the great majority of the adult members must be supplied from the schools of the institution, and consequently absolved from those prejudices with which we of the present generation are all of necessity more or less imbued.

The limits prescribed to the present address are already exceeded. But however imperfectly elicited many of the principles here touched upon, it is believed the present observations will sufficiently explain the nature of the institution, and the bearing of the different provisions made in the deed of the founder. It remains only to explain a few regulations adopted by the trustees, and to present a few observations applicable to those who may imagine, in the institution, a mode of life and a moral practice suited to their feelings and opinions.

First. It must be premised that Nashoba offers only a life of exertion, and, at the present time, one of privation: rough cabins, simple fare, and active occupation. Yet although based upon the principle of co-operative labor, no less than upon that of united interest, the imperfect education and pernicious habits which have unfitted many of the present generation for regular active exertion, who may *morally* be the most fitted to advance the interests of the institution, and to receive happiness therein, it is provided that an equivalent may be rendered in money by such members as cannot furnish by their labor suitable assistance to the society. The highest sum demanded of an individual is *two hundred dollars per annum*. The pecuniary demand, within this sum, will of course be proportioned to his or her fitness for useful occupation.

Secondly. Such as may possess the gifts of fortune, and the moral feeling to devote their property, or any part of it, to forward the object of the institution, will do so voluntarily, and must then place property so given at the disposal of the society, by a writing under their hand duly attested, and of which a record will be kept. But it will never be expected of any individual to bring with him more than the practical knowledge of a useful employment, agricultural or mechanical, with industry to pursue it steadily; or as above stated a sufficient equivalent in property to warrant exemption from the same.

Thirdly. The moral requisites which can alone ensure admission to any individual must, it is feared, circumscribe the admission of adults within narrow limits. An amiable and willing disposition, kindly affections, simple tastes, a high tone of moral feeling, with a liberal tone of thinking, must be evinced by those who aspire to the character trustees of Nashoba.

Fourthly. It will sufficiently appear from the substance of this address, and from the observations appended to the deed itself, that religion occupies no place in the institution, and the rule of *moral practice* there proposed has simply and singly in view human happiness: considering as virtuous whatever practice tends to promote that happiness, as vicious whatever tends to counteract it. It is indeed usual to attach as

many meanings to the word religion, as there are varieties in human opinion. So that it may sometimes mean the faith of the Jews, at others that of Christ, at others the peculiar doctrines of Rome or Geneva, or sometimes the worship of the mystical first cause of simple theism, and not unfrequently the moral principle acknowledged under various names by all teachers of what school soever. But as it is the especial object of the writer of this address to explain as far as possible, and without risk of misapprehension, the principles of the society to which she appertains, she would expressly specify that she uses the term *religion* as distinct from *moral practice*, and as signifying belief in, and worship rendered to, a Being or Beings not cognizable by the senses of man. And though it will of course never be demanded of any individual to adopt the shades of opinion held by the existing proprietors, yet it is equally due to them, and to the world, to remove all mystery from their principles, as from their practice, and to declare explicitly those opinions which they hold conscientiously. Candor is here the more necessary, as it is important that no one should seek the sanctuary of the institution, without thoroughly understanding the opinions and practice of its members. Let it therefore be understood that, without making their opinions a law, they will ever claim for themselves that which they accord to others, perfect liberty of speech as of thought; and holding the exercise of this liberty one of the first pleasures of life, as also, in their public character, one of its first duties, they will never forego its exercise. Those, therefore, acknowledging religious feelings will do well to examine the extent of their liberality before entering the precincts of a society whose opinions might wound those feelings.

Fifthly. The existing resident trustees of the institution have also decided that no religious doctrines shall be taught in the school, whenever it may be organized; but the reason of the children be left to its free developement, and encouraged to examine all opinions, and to receive or reject them, according to the bearings of facts, and the strength of their moral testimony.

Sixthly. In conformity with the provisions of the deed, which binds the trustees to the opening of a school for children of color, and with a view to consult the best interests of the race peculiarly recommended to their care, as well as the best interests of humanity in general, they propose, as soon as measures can be taken, and means supplied for their reception, to receive children, either as pensioners for the sum of *one hundred dollars per annum*, all expenses included, or without payment, upon condition that the parents or guardians shall transfer to the institution all rights over the children so received—such children to be in all things treated and cared for the same as the children born in the institution.

Seventhly. Any persons of property, sympathizing with the objects of the institution, and desirous of contributing to forward the same, could not better apply their succors than to the building up of its school either by devoting a sum of money for raising the necessary buildings, at the present much wanted, or by supplying them with books, maps, globes, a philosophical apparatus, &c. . Donations of books, to aid the formation of the library of the institution, will be at all times highly valuable.

Eighthly. It is conceived that, with some exceptions, the institution of Nashoba will be found most suited to young persons, of both sexes, of independent minds and liberal education: men under the age of thirty, who have yet their attachments to form, and whose feelings are unblunted by logg commerce with the world, and by the debasing spirit of trade; and young women of mental energy, amiable manners and dispositions, and small independent property, or, in place of the latter, and which were yet better, possessing the knowledge of some useful occupation in the house, the dairy, or the school, adequate to cover their expenses, and to promote the well being of society. It is particularly recommended to every young man, before he visit the institution with a view to being received therein, that he apply himself to some useful trade, by making a short but active apprenticeship to a good artizan or mechanic,—blacksmith, carpenter, sawyer, brickmaker, bricklayer, shoemaker, tanner, weaver, &c., or to a farmer, gardener, &c. The grafting, pruning, and proper treatment of fruit trees, and skilful raising of vegetables, planting and dressing a vineyard, and, above all, the manual labor of a farm, the care and management of cattle, &c., will furnish employment of the first utility. It is, also, equally recommended to young women to acquire a previous knowledge of some useful employment. Plaiting and making straw hats, spinning, weaving, simple cookery, baking, or any of the various occupations necessary to human life and social comfort. By this is meant not a *general* or *imperfect* knowledge of any employment, but a thorough and practical one. Let no one seek Nashoba with a view of teaching the *science* of a business, or superintending the work of others. All must bring hands as well as heads, and, above all, kind and willing *hearts*, ever disposed to make light of inconveniences, and to find the best enjoyment in promoting the happiness of others. Moreover, let none imagine that they can enter an institution based on the novel principle of cooperation without experiencing inconveniences and difficulties both moral and physical. *They will experience many*, and nothing but a strong moral purpose—a real heart interest in the success of the undertaking, a deep conviction of the truth of the principles, which it aspires practically to illustrate, can strengthen them to weather such difficulties. Possessed of the moral requisites, they will succeed and ensure the success of the institution. But, until a sufficient number possessed of these qualifications shall be collected at Nashoba, the experiment must remain as it is—in embryo only.

Ninthly. It would be well for every individual to bring with him the tools necessary in his particular trade; and Europeans, reaching New Orleans, may also bring with them a matress, blankets, linen, and any other convenience, which their habits may render agreeable, and with which a young and remote settlement is but scantily provided. Among these, should always be included a good knife, fork, spoon, and drinking cup. Strangers will always render a service to the institution, by bringing with them any valuable seeds of superior quality, for the garden or or farm, cuttings of valuable vines, or grafts of fruit.

Nashoba is situated fourteen miles from the little town of Memphis, which stands on the eastern bank of the Mississippi river, 800 miles above the city of New Orleans. Those reaching it from Europe by the

route of New Orleans, should be careful to avoid arriving in that city during the midsummer and early autumnal months. By leaving any of the European ports during the months of October, November, or December, they may expect to make the pleasantest southern passage, and will arrive in New Orleans during a delightful season. From New Orleans, steamboats, which navigate the Mississippi at all seasons, will land passengers and luggage at Memphis, where they will find themselves within a short ride, or even walk, of Nashoba. Those preferring the northern route by New York or Philadelphia, can make the voyage during any of the summer or autumnal months, from April till November, and may then traverse the most interesting part of the United States, and take steamboat, for Memphis, on the upper waters of the Ohio. For this route, the spring and early summer months are the most convenient, the rivers being then full and navigation open. It may be well to observe, that this route is the most interesting, but the most expensive.

It is proposed to establish regular communications between the society and suitable correspondents in the leading countries of Europe, Great Britain, France, Germany, Holland, and Switzerland.

At present it will suffice to name the Cooperative Society, Red Lion square, London, and count de Lasteyrie, Paris.

At Sea, 4th December, 1827. -

FRANCES WRIGHT.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE BIBLE GOD.

We find that this God, whom revelation makes known, is an inconsistent being, full of strange whims and contradictions. One upon whom there can be no dependance, as he himself confesses that he deceived the prophets. (Ezek. xiv. 9.)

He boasts that he is almighty; yet curses the people } Gen. xvii. 1
because they come not to his *help against the mighty.* } Judges v. 23

When he made heaven and earth, he said that all things contained therein were *very good*; yet the stars are not pure, nor the heavens clean, in his sight; besides a number of birds, beasts, and creeping things, which are an abomination to him: even man, whom he made in his own image, had a portion of matter which he considered superfluous, or why command Abram to cut it off? } Gen. i. 31
Job xxv. 4
— xv. 15
Lev. xi. —
Gen. xvii. 11

He rested from all his works, and was refreshed; yet he is continually working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. } Ex. xxxi. 17
Phill. ii. 13

He commanded that the seventh day should be kept holy; but the priests say that he has since changed his mind, transferring the holiness from the seventh to the first day of the week; notwithstanding it is written, that, with him, there is no *variableness, neither shadow of turning.* } Exod. xx. 10
James i. 17

He is *slow* to anger; yet he slew 50,070 persons in an instant, for looking into his travelling box. Ps. cxlv. 8
1 Sam. vi. 19

His anger endureth but a *moment*; yet, when it is kindled, he makes his people to wander in a wilderness during the space of forty years. Ps. xxx. 5
Numbers xxxii. 13

He kept them as the *apple of his eye*, by hanging their heads up against the sun to dry! Deut. xxxii. 10
Numb. xxv. 4

He chasteneth his people as a father would his son; first seeing them famishing with hunger, before he would give them meat; and then, when given, smiting them with a very great plague, while the meat was between their teeth, ere it was chewed. Deut. viii. 5
Numb. xi. 38

As he delighteth in *mercy*, he commands his people to show *no mercy* nor *pity* upon their captives. Micah vii. 18
Deut. vii. 2, 16

He is very pitiful, and of tender mercy; therefore promises that their infants shall be *dashed to pieces*! and their women with child *ripped up*!! James v. 11
Hosea xiii. 16

He doth not afflict nor grieve the children of men willingly; yet smites them with emeralds in their secret parts; pelts them with great stones; sends fiery serpents, plagues, pestilence, and grievous famines among them. Lam. iii. 33
1 Sam. v. 9
Josh. x. 14
Numb. xxi. 6

His mercy endureth for ever, by raining fire and brimstone upon them at one time, and drowning them all, like a parcel of rats, at another. 1 Chro. xvi. 41
Gen. xix. 24
— vii. 21

He has no desire to see the nakedness of a man, but has a strong propensity to discover the *secret parts* of a woman; he being very expert in the *opening* and *closing* of wombs. Exod. xx. 26
Isaiah iii. 17
— xlvii. 31
Gen. xxix. 31
— xx. 18

He says he that hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked; yet hardens the hearts of the nations, that they may be destroyed. Ezek. xviii. 32
Josh. xi. 20

He willeth that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved; so sends them a strong delusion, that they might believe a lie and be *damned*. 1 Tim. ii. 4
2 Thess. ii. 11

He justifieth the *ungodly*, but will not justify the *wicked*. Rom. iv. 5
Exod. xxiii. 7

He forgiveth their iniquities, and remembereth their sin no more; yet will by no means clear the guilty. Jer. xxxi. 34
Ex. xxxiv. 7

He punishes the just for the unjust; and makes the wicked ransom the righteous. 1 Peter iii. 18
Prov. xxi. 18

He cuts off the righteous and the wicked, because he delights to exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. Ezek. xxi. 3
Jer. ix. 24

He appoints some kings to utter destruction, and chooses the poor of this world, to inherit his kingdom; yet, of a truth, he is no respecter of persons. 1 Kings xx. 42
James ii. 5
Acts x. 34

He loved Jacob, and hated Esau, because his ways are equal. Mal. i. 2, 3
Ezek. xviii. 25

He will not allow his priests to take to wife a woman who is whore; but commands them to take a wife of whoredoms, one who is an adulteress. } Lev. xxi. 7
Hosea i. 2
— iii. 1

He says, thou shalt not commit adultery; yet promises them that their wives shall be *ravished*, while their children are being *dashed to pieces*. } Exod. xx. 14
Isaiah xiii. 16

He makes foolish the wisdom of this world, by destroying the wisdom of the wise; although he knows, that when made fools, they say in their heart *there is no god*. } 1 Cor. i. 19, 20
Ps. liii. 1

He gave them statutes that were *not good*, and judgments whereby they should *not live*; because his ways are just and true. } Ezek. xx. 25
Rev. xv. 3

His eyes are too pure to behold evil; yet while the people were waiting for good, evil came from the Lord. } Hab. i. 13
Micah i. 12

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 16th March, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued, at half past 2 o'clock.

THE CORRESPONDENT

Is published at No. 15 Chamber street, New York, (where communications are to be addressed.) Terms three dollars per annum, payable in advance.

* * The first four numbers of the *Correspondent* being now reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

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George H. Evans, Printer, No. 284 Greenwich street, New York.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 9.

NEW YORK, MARCH 22, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ANTIDOTE.

Mr. Editor— How comes it that you pass over in silence the numerous, though impotent, attacks upon the cause of truth, and its advocates, which appear in that weekly farrago of froth, the Antidote. Convinced that your powerful pen could easily put a *quietus* upon such a miserable grub worm as the conductor thereof, I am surprised at your apathy. Perhaps you consider a foe of such puny and contemptible abilities as unworthy your notice. If so, permit me, a plain, illiterate member of the "lower orders," one who knows nothing about inspiration, revelation, transubstantiation, or any other mystification, to say a few words in support of truth against wilful falsehood; common sense against folly; infidelity, peace, and harmony, against Christianity, cruelty, and bloodshed.

In the last number (36) of the Antidote, [Antidote against truth, it should be called,] the *pious* editor has seen proper to introduce the name of Thomas Paine, followed by a long string of what he appears to consider *refuted* objections to the authenticity of the "old book." I really pity this *learned* editor, or any other person who finds it necessary to adhere thus tenaciously to the revolting fable of Christianity, or who can persuade themselves that the numerous glaring and unanswerable objections to a conscientious belief in that fable, are surmounted by the canting, wealth, and unsatisfactory logic of such an ignorant though ambitious and disappointed English parson, as David Simpson. I shall here insert, for the benefit of such of your readers as do not see the Antidote, a few specimens of the manner in which the enemies of truth vainly endeavor to overcome the immovable barriers presented against the further encroachments of ignorance and priestcraft, by that great apostle of liberty, that champion of Reason, Common Sense, and the Rights of Man, the immortal PAINÉ. It will be unnecessary to premise that the language I shall have to quote is that of the *very reverend* David Simpson. "Paine alleges that 'Moses could not be the author of the five books which go under his name, because they are frequently written in the third person.' Xenophon and Cæsar will answer this difficulty."

Passing over the inconsistency of the reverend gentleman's appeal to *profane* authors in support of any thing *sacred* or *divine*, I answer that Mr. Paine does *not* adduce, from the fact alone of Moses's using the third person, that he was not the writer of the Pentateuch; it is only brought forward by him as additional proof, and which, in my opinion, he might have dispensed with, and still had sufficient for his purpose. So much

for the candor and fair argument of a Christian priest. But in the name of Mr. Paine, and in his words, I ask the wise man of the Antidote, would not Moses render himself truly ridiculous and absurd, by saying "now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were on the face of the earth?" As to the reasonableness, the propriety of Moses informing us where he was, not was to be, buried, on the top of Mount Pisgah, there is about as much in it as in the story of the Irish bishop's swimming over the river Boyne, with his head in his teeth.

"Paine confounds mathematical with historical evidence. Any novice in science knows the difference." (So he does, Mr. Simpson, and so did Mr. Paine, who did *not* confound them, as you assert.) "Paine confounds, also, a book that is genuine, with one that is authentic. He ought to have known that the difference is extremely great and important." Now, I hope the Antidote will tell us, seeing the reverend author is gone to his reward, not only wherein Mr. Paine "confounds" the meaning of words so much, but also wherein the great and important difference between genuineness and authenticity lies. Here we see Christianity and quibble. When the reverend priesthood and their foolish abettors are staggered, they fly to misrepresentation and falsehood. Only to think of an ignorant priest, and the stupid writer of the Antidote, criticising and condemning the literary talents of one of the most polished and grammatical writers of which the English language can boast. "He declares the prodigies recorded by Livy and Tacitus to be attended with as good evidence as the miracles of Christ. No man of *any* information can justify such an assertion." Oh! what a damning charge, that a man should pronounce one marvellous story, one impossibility, as destitute of truth as any other! Now, as the reverend gentleman *politely* says to Mr. Paine, "who is the liar now?" Humble as is the light in which I view my own mental or literary qualifications, I must be permitted to lay claim to *some* information; and I with the confidence of full and entire conviction assert, that the Roman miracles are supported by every whit as good evidence as the Christian ones, and, *vice versa*. So indeed are all miracles, or pretended violations of the laws of Nature, equally as well founded in fact; those in the Arabian Nights, those of St. Patrick, St. Peter, St. George, or any other *holy* saint, not excepted.

Whenever a system of religion has to resort to miracles, you may rest assured such religion is totally unable to produce any lasting benefit to mankind. When we imbibe a belief in what is impossible, we lose our hold of *terra firma*, are afloat in an ocean of doubts, and by grasping at shadows, lose the substance, which would otherwise lay within our reach. A miracle, if I understand the meaning of the word, is nothing more than a chimera, a nonentity, an impossibility, and should be expunged from the vocabulary of every language on earth. "He asserts that miracles admit not of proof. Let the reader turn to Campbell on the subject. The testimony of five hundred, or fifty, or even of ten credible persons, is sufficient to establish the validity of any of the scriptural miracles, where there is no counter evidence." "Alas! poor ghost, I pity thee!" A man must indeed be far gone in priestianity, when he accedes to such logic as this. These Bible miracles, as they are termed, are said to have been performed 1800 years ago, in a distant part of the

globe, in a nation amongst all others the most ignorant in all branches of science and the arts, the most cruel and merciless both in their foreign and domestic policy. The accounts of these miracles have been translated, retranslated, revised, and no one knows by whom, or how often; yet at this day we are told they are established by the testimony of five hundred, or of fifty credible persons. But, in any event, this is reasoning *a priori*. We must first know what constitutes a miracle. The testimony of five hundred people is sufficient to establish—what? why, that they saw what I did not see; that is all. But I assert that the testimony of five hundred thousand is insufficient to prove they saw what never was seen, and what from the demonstrably fixed, unalterable course of Nature, never did or ever can take place. Turn to Campbell, indeed! Turn to old mother Shipton for corroborative proof; to the story of St. George and the dragon; to all the marvellous legendary tales related concerning every old cathedral and monastery in England. I hesitate not to say these have several advantages over the Testament ones: they, as well as the others, are Christian ones, took place more recently, are less unreasonable, (though that circumstance I presume is nothing in their favor,) and besides have been handed down to us without the *benefit* of half a dozen translations. Turn to Campbell! an honest, unprejudiced mind will condemn the advice whilst it pities the superannuated, credulous donor, who was weak enough to suppose Mr. Campbell could throw any light upon a subject, which, the more it is probed, the more it will be found to be a fable, a complete *ignus fatuus*.

But I presume I have brought forward sufficient to show that the present attempt to support the incomprehensible and useless system of religion called Christian has ended, as all similar attempts ever must, in displaying only the folly and bigoted enthusiasm of its advocates. Nothing like proof of its divine origin has ever been produced that can satisfy a calm and unbiassed mind in its inquiry after truth, the great polar star which leads to peace and happiness. I shall, however, indulge in one more quotation, which is as follows: "Paine affirms that Paul's discourse on the resurrection is doubtful jargon—as destitute of meaning as the tolling of the bell at the funeral; and he has the audacity repeatedly to call Paul a fool. Locke, Littleton, and Paley will settle the matter of the apostle's foolishness with this doughty champion for unbelief." Boulanger, Palmer, and Carlile might also have a share in settling the matter of Paul's foolishness, but I am anxious that one mightier than they should be heard; and Paine needs no second, or supporter, is "himself a host," and will easily put to flight a whole army of such Lilliputian antagonists as parson Simpson and his craven squire of the *Antidote*:

"As to the doubtful jargon ascribed to Paul in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians, which makes part of the burial service of some Christian sectaries, it is as destitute of meaning as the tolling of the bell at the funeral; it explains nothing to the understanding—illustrates nothing to the imagination, but leaves the reader to find any meaning if he can. 'All flesh (says he) is not the same flesh. There is one flesh of men; another of beasts; another of fishes; and another of birds.' And what then?—nothing. A cook could have said as much. 'There are also

(says he) bodies celestial and bodies terrestrial; the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.' And what then?—nothing. And what is the difference?—nothing that he has told. 'There is (says he) one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars.' And what then?—nothing; except that he says that *one star differeth from another star in glory*, instead of distance; and he might as well have told us that the moon did not shine so bright as the sun. All this is nothing better than the jargon of a conjurer, who picks up phrases he does not understand, to confound the credulous people who have come to have their fortunes told. Priests and conjurers are of the same trade."

I beg leave here to congratulate the editor of the *Antidote* on the encouraging—the glorious prospects in view by the friends and advocates of *infidelity*. Other liberal periodicals than the *Correspondent* will assuredly be commenced; other institutions similar to the Free Press Association will spring up in different parts of this politically free country. Liberalism will overflow the land, like the fruitful Nile, destroying, in its course, priesthood and its blighting effects, making straight a highway for the advancement of truth, morality, and universal peace. Such non-descripts as ghosts, miracles, and devils will no longer be allowed "a local habitation and a name." This, the true millenium, may not arrive during his or my state of conscious existence: we shall have returned, in obedience to the irrevocable law of Nature, to the great mass of matter, of which we are an indestructible part. But it is a consolation to my mind, the reflection that there is such a period in store for posterity, when mankind, scattering far from them the cursed habilaments with which ignorant fools and interested knaves have so long enfolded them, shall dare to exercise uncontrolled the noblest gift of Nature, the gift of reason. Such a period may be yet remote; but come it will, and come it shall, "for a' that."

I am, sir, yours,

At Sea, Feb. 1, 1828.

S.

LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.

Mr. Editor—I have observed, in some of the late numbers of the *Correspondent*, an article or two intimating that man is not a free agent, but compelled to act from necessity. The short article in No. 2, page 31, I shall now more particularly allude to. If I had not reason to believe that this principle, that man had not the liberty of action but from necessity, was generally attended with the worst consequences—an obstacle to the improvement of the human mind, and a doctrine calculated to aid tyrants, and reduce mankind to the lowest grades of ignorance, I should not have presumed, in my homespun language, to have made a reply. I shall, however, not only endeavor to confute the doctrine of necessity, but to demonstrate the fact, by circumstances, that man is, or may be, a free agent.

The writer above alluded to says, "According to the system of necessity, vice is no more in our own power than virtue: we act in both cases under the impressions which certain objects make on our senses, and these senses move our desires, operate on the will, and the will produces

the action." This is, in fact, the case with all the brute creation, and, in a great measure, with mankind in a savage state, where reason is not exercised as a restraint. They act under the impressions which certain objects make on their senses, and these senses move their desires, operate on the will, and the will produces the action. But with those who pretend to any degree of civilization, or to observe any rule of conduct, reason is, or may be, exercised, either as a restraining or propelling power, to regulate or direct those propensities conceived or set in motion by sensation.

If mankind, surrounded, as many of the people of these states are, with the arts and sciences, and luxuries of life, institutions and established rules, which are necessary to maintain civilized society, should neglect the exercise of their reason in restraining those desires within the bounds of propriety, or neglect to act on every occasion without them, they would soon reduce themselves to the state of savages, if not a par with the brute creation, as some sections of the human family have already done, and as individuals do daily among us by improperly indulging these desires. Thousands of instances might be brought to prove the fact that mankind have power, in a great measure, to decide their own destiny; but the case is so evident that I think it needless to bring them into view.

The writer above alluded to justly observes that the rectitude or depravity of man's conduct greatly depends on the impressions he receives in his youth. "But let no man (says he) be alarmed at the idea of being a mere machine, for at any rate he is not of his own making, and therefore has no more right to claim a liberty of action than the right of making himself; he can do nothing which is not intended by a superior power, and therefore need not fear being impelled to vice by an irresistible propensity; for if such is the will of providence, it is not in his power to resist, though he may suffer for his imprudence." Moreover, (says he,) "I will not venture to maintain that whatever is, is right; but I will affirm that it cannot be otherwise than it is." These assertions seem to be the writer's own sentiments; but whether they are designed as being according to the present prevailing system or systems of necessity, if what I have written is not sufficient to confute them, more can be said. There is one thing, however, certain: if every act of man is determined by a superior power, man is not only guiltless, but it is useless for him to pretend to improve his condition.

OBSERVER.

Reason is the image of God stamped on man at his birth, the understanding breathed into him with the breath of life, and in the participation of which alone he is raised above the brute creation, and his own physical nature! Reason is the queen of the moral world, the soul of the universe, the lamp of human life, the pillar of society, the foundation of law, the beacon of nations, the golden chain let down from heaven, which links all animated and all intelligent natures in one common system; and, in the vain strife between fanatic innovation and fanatic prejudice, we are exhorted to dethrone this queen of the world, to blot out this light of the mind, to deface this fair column, to break in pieces this golden chain!

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 22, 1828.

* * The first four numbers of the *Correspondent* being now reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

Free Press Association Lectures.—Owing to the crowded attendance at the lectures of the Free Press Association, the committee of management have found it expedient to issue tickets of admission, which are to go into effect on Sunday the 30th March. The tickets will be ready for delivery by the stewards on Sunday (tomorrow) the 23d instant, at 6 1-4 cents each, which will admit to *two* lectures; or four tickets for 12 1-2 cents, which will admit to *eight* lectures. Ladies admitted without tickets.

As no member of the Association receives any money for his services, the proceeds of the tickets are to be applied to the payment of rent, and rendering the hall comfortable for the accommodation of the public.

Robert Owen.—When we alluded to the proceedings of this gentleman during his stay at New Orleans, we were only enabled to give the substance of his "challenge" to the clergy. Having since received a complete copy, we subjoin it for the satisfaction of our readers:

Mr. Owen, to the Clergy of New Orleans.

Gentlemen—I have now finished a course of lectures in this city, the principles of which are in direct opposition to those which you have been taught it your duty to preach. It is of importance to the world that *truth* upon these momentous subjects should be now established upon a certain and sure foundation. You and I, and all our fellow men, are deeply interested that there should be no farther delay. With this view, without one hostile or unpleasant feeling on my part, I propose a friendly public discussion, the most open that the city of New Orleans will afford, or if you prefer it, a more private meeting, when half a dozen friends of each party shall be present, in addition to half a dozen gentlemen whom you may associate with you in the discussion. The time and place of meeting to be of your appointment.

I propose to prove, as I have already attempted to do in my lectures, that all the religions of the world have been founded on the ignorance of mankind; that they are directly opposed to the never changing laws of our nature; that they have been and are the real source of vice, disunion, and misery of every description; that they are now the only real bar to the formation of a society of virtue, of intelligence, of charity in its most extended sense, and of sincerity and kindness among the whole human family; and that they can be no longer maintained except through the ignorance of the mass of the people, and the tyranny of the few over that mass.

With feelings of perfect good will to you, which extends also in perfect sincerity to all mankind, I subscribe myself your friend in a just cause,

New Orleans, Jan. 29, 1828.

ROBERT OWEN.

P. S. If this proposal should be declined, I shall conclude, as I have long most conscientiously been compelled to do, that the principles which I advocate are unanswerable truths.

Progress of Liberal Opinions.—Continuing to receive the most flattering accounts from all parts of the Union of the advancement of liberal opinions, we give the following extracts for the information of those who, with us, feel interested in the triumph of truth over bigotry and fanaticism.

Extract of a letter, dated Cincinnati, February 24, 1828.

"No work ever published holds more preeminent claims upon public patronage than the *Correspondent*. None was ever calculated in an equal degree to serve the cause of human light and liberty. Its success is hailed as consecrating a new age to the empire of mind; as laying the only true foundation for all that is good and excellent in human institutions. Building upon a rotten foundation is entirely vain: the rubbish must be cast down, before a permanent and durable structure can be raised.

"Our numbers in your state—the rate of their increase, and prospects, are subjects of earnest inquiry, and would afford pleasure and benefit if known here. The society in this city consists of about forty zealous members. We have many warm wishers in the neighborhood of adjoining towns and counties. Our organization and means of communication and cooperation are too new and limited, to speak with confidence of immediate results. The snow ball at first increases with comparative slowness. It is the same with all human associations. I disregard entirely the heresy, that the timid and cautious inculcate, viz.: "let the human mind alone, it will emancipate itself." If Mahomed conquered by the sword, John Calvin, and other disciples of Christ, by fables and denunciations, surely we, who work with the golden shafts of the mind, and under the triumphant powers of the press, cannot hesitate in the course recommended by experience, or be doubtful of the issue of that course."

Extract of a letter, dated Kendall, Stark County, Ohio, February 20, 1828.

"Yours of February 4th, I design to read at Canton court house, where I have been delivering lectures semimonthly, and shall deliver one on Saturday evening next. My audiences at Canton and Kendall are large, and there has been a great "revival" at Canton; and violent opposition has only fixed the minds of the wavering. In the small village of Canton, there are forty of the *true church*. Of four churches, ours is the largest. We use great plainness of speech in our lectures. I have been publicly opposed by a catholic priest. Another has sent a challenge to debate the principles which I advocate in my lectures. I have accepted it on condition that he prove himself *respectable*, as I am personally unacquainted with him. The *Ohio Repository* is to be the organ through which the public will be informed of the discussion. The progress of the principles has been very firm since our arrival. We have lectures every Sunday, and the *Odes* of the "Free Press Association" are sung in the meeting.

Yours,

SAML. UNDERHILL.

Western Teller.—We regret to state, that the intelligent editor of this invaluable paper has been compelled by ill health to suspend his labors for the present. In No. 25, Vol. 2, he announces the fact, and takes his

leave of the public in an article of considerable length, containing so able an exposition of the impositions practised by an idle and profligate priesthood to extract money from the pockets of the industrious, that we have concluded on giving it publicity in the *Correspondent*. After some introductory observations on the nature of tyranny, which he defines "the employment of force or fraud in the exaction of regular tribute, and the maintenance of continued power," the editor remarks,

"It is not necessary, as most people imagine, that, to constitute a tyranny, that there should be *one* great monster, holding and exercising, in his own person, certain unlimited powers, wielded for unlimited mischief. Modern tyranny has its system of manners and good breeding; it is undergoing every species of refinement indicated by the progress of the age, as necessary to secure its success: once it was a single, now it is a many headed monster; once it was bold, rough, and daring, now it is artful, treacherous, plausible, and insinuating. Did society at any former age of the world support a greater number than it now does of the mischievous and idle? Was it ever taxed more heavily than it now is, by vice and pretenders? Was it at any former period more the slave of fraud, luxury, and civil impostors? Who can or dare answer these questions in the affirmative?

"There appears to be a kind of universal consent, by which all that is worthless in person and principle shall live on, and consume, the real substance of the land. The number of priests, or clergy, in the United States, is 17,000, whose average salaries will not differ much from \$700; which create a yearly tax of eleven millions. To these must be added, as a portion of their political system—missions, foreign and domestic; Bible, tract, and education societies; donations, exacted by fear or hope; sumptuous temples, churches, and furniture—creating a further tax, equal to, if not beyond, the first sum: say the total is but \$20,000,000, (which will fall below the true estimate,) it is a heavy tax for the ignorant and industrious to pay to idle and dissolute masters. Yet it is paid; and paid, too, by the working class, every dollar of it. It appears at first view as if others paid a share of it: on examination it will be found, that all that class who live by their wit's end, in reality, pay nothing; taxes are the product of earning and industry. If this tax were paid to two or three families who claimed it as a hereditary right, then we should clamer and call it a rank piece of tyranny. Is it different because it is paid to many, and that by virtue of hereditary imposition and fraud? Certainly the cases are precisely the same. If the priests were to tell us that they collect this tax by virtue of an edict or declaration of Moses and Aaron, we would refuse to pay it; yet every dollar of it is so collected, with the addition only of the trifling fraud of representing Deity as speaking by Moses and Aaron: but Jesus Christ is also made use of as a bailiff in collecting this tax, and as a cover for all the frauds and vices with which it is attended.

"To the order and liberty of society it can make no difference, whether an aristocracy be of Moses, Aaron, Christ, or by hereditary right: it is as much a tyranny under the one as the other. The one is as much a state of oppression and fraud as the other; all are nothing more or less than schemes of raising money out of the honest, industrious, and credulous.

for the support of impostors. Aaron and Moses succeeded by it; Mahomet succeeded by it: the impostors of every age have done what they are doing in this—they have lived on the people by it. Is any one so mad as to believe that the system of converting, of missions, of establishing sects, of propagating this or that faith, would exist one moment provided their advocates could not make money by them? No! they would stand precisely where another class of the nobility did by the adoption of our constitution, and where all nobility must stand when the people come to their senses, among the rank and file. The whole swarm of pretenders who now set up divine authority for making divisions and mischief among men, and for sweating their pockets, would be turned to some useful employment. The objection urged against them is that they constitute, in every political sense of the word, a tyranny; that is, they live on the people and out of the people, both by force and fraud, and these of the most base and ignoble character. The force they use is that of hell fire and God's displeasure: the fraud is the same—it is all fraud and falsehood.

"Now if it be a right or a duty to oppose tyranny under any circumstances, it certainly must be right when our tyrants, not content with earthly, usurp also heavenly authority over us; and even with a daring and impious confidence call down divine vengeance to aid them in sweating our pockets. This tyranny is not opposed on account alone of its positive evils, but on that of principle. Being a tyranny, it is unnecessary to inquire whether it be better or worse than some other tyrannies: if it be not as destructive as might be, we owe no thanks to its authors; they are increasing in numbers and rapacity: no friend to human rights and liberty will fail to oppose them. The reasoning will be this: if one class, if one form of tyranny be supportable, tyrants are then naturalised to our soil; any other class and any form of tyrants is equally supportable. We are already corrupted and subdued when the mind consents to their establishment. He who contends that priests have any thing to do with the concerns of heaven or Deity, contends that Deity and heaven are a *monied* concern.

"The poor of the earth have but an indifferent chance of success under such a system. Then, again—if the poor can be saved without money, why should others pay for salvation? The idea of going to heaven through the aid of priests, places mankind at once in a state of dependance and inferiority! When once accustomed to this state, they are prepared for all those degrading concessions and compliances, which constitute the condition of master and slave. Firmness and nobleness of mind is gone; men become dastards in character, and recreant in nature. The designing and hypocritical, who believe nothing of the imposition, join in the practice of it, to carry their own worldly schemes; some of pride, some of power, others of gain: like all schemes of tyranny, the burthen of paying and fighting for them falls invariably on the common mass. It is impossible that the honest portion of community could for a moment maintain this system, if once brought to see its falsity. The whole system has been believed and adopted without a particle of proof; and that under the most unaccountable circumstances of absurdity and contradiction. Why do not honest men first demand the proof of it before they

become its slaves? It is true that all systems of faith and religion are got up by man, to impose on his fellow; or it is true that one or more of them are instituted by deity; if any one be instituted by deity, which one is it? When was it instituted? where was it instituted? and why was it instituted? No mark is put upon any known system by which it can be distinguished as coming from deity: on the contrary, all bear the mark of the folly and imperfection of man. If deity has designated any one system, he has done a vain thing, inasmuch as no man has yet discovered this divine designation; all pretend to have it, however much opposed to each other, which is sufficient evidence that none have it. If some have it and others not, then deity has pointed out a system for *a part* of mankind only, in exclusion of the remainder. This is a sort of freemason system, in which deity is made to admit a few favorites, and none others: is it the rich or the poor he admits—the learned or the ignorant? Certainly such an admission or designation is directly opposed to all his known laws and regulations. The whole compass of Nature contradicts every supposition of any special designation or revelation. No instance can be adduced throughout the vastness and variety of God's wonderful words, where he has evinced any partiality or preference for one race or sect over another. His bounties, his riches, his providence, his care, his mercy, his rain and sunshine, are equally over all; the high, the low, the savage, the civilized, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air. Who dare or can contend that deity has reserved for a few priests, some secret conjuration, by which, like magicians, they can conjure into or out of heaven just whom they please. No! the absurdity is a libel upon his nature. Heaven is open to all. Deity is open to all, alike and on the same conditions. One man was never trusted with one of those conditions in exclusion of other men. God never constituted one man his agent or attorney, and kept himself from others. It is impossible that he could act so partially and unjustly. He trusts and confides in all alike. If all do not possess God's revealed will, and his secret will, alike, then no one possesses either. If all are not to reach heaven, then none will reach it.

"Now what is the value or worth of priests and priestcraft? Ah, but are not priests necessary to keep up morality? Yes, if they would *practice* it, they are just as necessary as others who practice it. They seldom inculcate morality, or consider is necessary to their system. They generally hold that men can do nothing to merit the seal of the divine black art: this discourages and renders men desperate. Their system is one of division, separation, distrust, and mystery; totally unfit for the social state. It conciliates and elevates the rich; it extends favors to one sect, and leaves or abandons all others; it changes the general philanthropy and affections of the human heart into one of a contracted and clannish character. It makes the human breast the seat of darkness, distrust, coldness, jealousy, envy, bigotry, and desolation. Instead of brothers and neighbors, it makes enemies and tyrants; instead of friends, it makes foes; instead of men of feeling and charity, it makes hypocrites and intolerants. The world has never seen, imagination has never painted, a monster so replete with desolation and ruin, as is found in the mock divinity of the present system. Against its disgraceful tyranny, had

I a thousand tongues, they should be raised ; had I million pens, they should be ceaselessly employed. Ye who profess to have the least share of philanthropy, look abroad and point out a single corner of the earth not made desolate by it—one which is not stained by the blood of its deluded martyrs ! It raises the father's hand against the son ; brothers against brothers ; child against parent ; country against country ; and arrays God against all. Is this a fit system for rational beings, for freemen, to build up and sustain by a tax of twenty millions per annum ?—by an avaricious and wrangling priesthood—by a few bungling fables—by a perversion of common sense—by an abandonment of all respect for themselves ?

“When the constitution of my country is violated ; when oaths are violated, and political minions are trampling alike on civil and divine justice ; what says this modern magog of divinity to these crying abuses ? *Our* members, *our* sect must be supported ; the discipline of the church must be supported ; conversions, crying, and praying must be supported ; the state must take care of itself ; we have no jurisdiction over civil crimes ; that is, we know of no crime against the state which our members can commit, provided they *pay* well. With this recommendation, they are sure of a passport to heaven. Ask for reform, ask for the correction of frauds and abuse ; the church answers, *Our* sect support each other : we *pursue*, we prosecute only when our dogmas are disputed, or our fees refused. He who says that the right and power of the church are not divine, is an infidel, and not fit to live. He who defrauds and overreaches his neighbor, or betrays his country, is a favorite, a second David—provided he *pay* well at the church treasury.

“When civil power is to be obtained for civil oppression and tyranny, then the body and soul of the church are active in its advancement, as all history fully testifies. The principle is amply illustrated by the fact that this paper, which has been devoted to the rights of man, to the furtherance of his moral and social virtue, to his mental independence,—has been every where attacked and proscribed by the church, for the reason that it would not sanction and proclaim the divinity of its dogmas. The question is therefore fairly made : we must put down the tyranny of the church, or yield up our civil rights and liberties. What ! say the bigots and deluded, will you burn the Bible, extinguish hell fire, and destroy all our beautiful religion,—giving us nothing in their stead. Oh no ! we will give you a system of real religion, in the room of an imaginary one. We will substitute *practice* for profession. We will demand morals and good conduct, to be substituted in the room of mystery and hypocrisy : simplicity and universal benevolence, instead of sects, oppression, and taxation. As an example familiar to all, take that of the good *Samaritan* ; exempted, entirely exempted, of and from the contamination of all and every *system* of divinity. *Systems of divinity* ! a name inseparable from distraction, disorganization, and tyranny. These are the curse of the earth, the fables of delusion and imposition. These, and these are all, against which an eternal war is proclaimed ; not against virtue, piety, or goodness. The man who says, Lo ! here is God ; there is God ; come you this way ; follow me ; I will lead you to him ; this is the true, the orthodox, or the divine way

or system,—is an impostor, a knave, or fool ! He who says to all men, Do as did the good Samaritan, I will aid you,—is already as a God.

“ These remarks are addressed to the true and honest lovers of man’s liberty and equality ; if not clothed in language sufficiently simple and explicit to be understood, it will be cause of regret : the intention of the writer is good ; let that of the reader be the same.

“ The friends of liberal principles feel at times as did those veterans who commenced the glorious struggle for our civil independence. The morning will sometimes lower ; heavy clouds will hang upon the horizon ; the hosts of delusion will seem to gather in overwhelming force ; discouragement and doubts will of course arise : the feigned devils and fabled orthodoxy cast their malignant forms upon the path of light and science, as if its sun were about to be extinguished. Cheer up, thou brothers of the good Samaritan ! Earthly powers cannot prevail against you ; thy triumph stands upon the mountain’s base ; the eternal sun, as he flies on his empyrean wing ; the ceaseless round of laws eternal, are thy unfailing eloquence and untiring argument. The ocean speaks for thee ; the mighty tempest uttereth great things for thee ; the bow, the blue and starry vault, the times and seasons,—yea, all the vast profound of Nature, counsel for thee. The ways of deluded men, themselves, bear testimony of thy victory. Theory after theory fall by their own absurdity. In less than half a century, the orthodoxy of witchcraft and the trinity have received a fearful check : where it was once death to whisper, the voice is now audibly heard, and often without alarm. Ten years ago there was not a single journal in the Union, now there are eight or ten, in favor of liberal principles. Even in the legislatures of New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, some public movements have been made to restrain the rapacity of church tyranny : our numbers are gradually increasing ; our good conduct, our perseverance, is necessary to induce inquiry. Inquiry, candid inquiry, will lead to a perfect conviction of the corruption and falsity of the fabled systems.

“ Although ill health compels the editor to retire, for the present, from a weekly publication, his feeble aid, while life continues, shall be cheerfully lent to the support of the great cause,—that of universal truth and benevolence. Arrangements are expected to be made, by which the *Tiler* can be thrown into other hands for publication.”

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE BIBLE GOD.

Continued from page 128.

He is the creator of evil ; yet the earth is full of his goodness.	} Isaiah xlv. 7 Ps. xxxiii. 5
None can stay his hand, or say, what doeth thou ? yet Moses could prevail upon him to repent of the evil which he thought to do unto the people.	
He is not a man to repent ; yet weary with repenting.	} Dan. iv. 35 Exod. xxxii. 14 1 Sam. xv. 20 Jer. xv. 6

- His eyes are in *every place*; yet he had a difficult matter to find Adam, when he *hid himself from the presence of the Lord*. } Prov. xvi. 3
Gen. iii. 9
- His eyes are running to and fro throughout the earth; yet he must come *down* to see whether things be so or not. } 2 Chr. xvi. 9
Gen. xviii. 21
- He is near to them that call upon him; yet those who do, complain of his being *afar off*. } Ps. xxxiv. 18
— x. 1
- He dwelleth in *thick darkness*; yet no man can approach him, by reason of the great light. } 1 Kings viii. 12
Ps. xcvi. 2
1 Tim. iv. 16
- He wishes that all men would seek him; though his most upright and faithful servant knew not where to *find him*. } Jer. xxix. 13
Job xxiii. 3
- He filleth heaven and earth; yet may be crammed into a little box of *shit-tim* wood. } Jer. xxxiii. 24
Ex. xxv. 8, 10
- He is willing to be made known, yet ashamed to show his face. } Hosea ii. 20
Ex. xxxiii. 23
Ex. xxxiii. 20
— — 11
- No man can see his face and live; yet Moses and likewise Jacob saw God face to face, as a man speaking with his friend. } Gen. xxxii. 30
1 John iv. 12
- No man hath seen him at any time; though seventy nobles not only *saw*, but did *eat and drink* with him. } Ex. xxiv. 10, 11
John v. 37
- His voice was never heard at any time; yet all the people of Israel acknowledged to have heard it. } Deut. v. 24
- It is impossible for him to lie; yet he promises not to perform that which he had previously sworn to perform. } Heb. vi. 18
Numb. xiv. 30
- He teaches some to lie, and sends a lying spirit into the mouth of others; yet lying lips are an abomination in his sight. } 1 Sam. xvi. 2
1 Kgs. xxii. 23
Prov. xii. 22
- He says, that whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; yet, his favorites may shed blood with impunity. } Gen. ix. 6
Exod. ii. 12
2 Sam. i. 15
- He is good, and doeth good; so sends an evil spirit among the people, that they may deal treacherously with each other, and get slain. } Ps. cxix. 68
Judges ix. 23
- He promised to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children; and children's children; yet, he says, the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father. } Exod. xxxiv. 7
Ezek. xviii. 20
- He says, that the children shall not be put to death for their fathers; yet he had seven of Saul's sons hung up before him for their father's fault. } Deut. xxiv. 16
2 Samuel
xxi. 9, 14
- To him belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him; yet he commanded Saul to go and smite Amalek, for their forefathers' transgression, to *spare them not*, but utterly destroy every man woman, child, and *suckling*. } Dan. ix. 9
1 Samuel
xv. 2, 3
- A thousand years being only in his sight but as yesterday, he set a bow in the clouds, to remind him of his promise. } Psalm xc. 4
Gen. ix. 16

He knoweth the secret of the heart ; yet must be acquainted with the wants of his creatures, before he can or will assist them. } Psalm xlv. 21
Phill. iv. 6

One time he bids them not defraud, nor deal falsely with their neighbors, nor yet to covet any thing belonging to them : at another time he commands them to borrow all they can, and spoil their neighbors, the Egyptians. } Lev. xix. 13
Exod. xx. 17
— iii. 22

He suffered Cain to take away the life of his brother ; although the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind, were in his hand. } Gen. iv. 9
Job xii. 10

His enemies he cast down into hell, and delivered them *into chains of darkness*, reserving them to the judgment of the great day ; yet, they are going to and fro throughout the earth, and sometimes mounting up to heaven. } Jude 6
Job i. 6, 7

He forbids them to make any graven image, the likeness of any thing that is in heaven or in earth ; yet, shortly after, commands them to make two cherubims. } Exod. xx. 4
— xxv. 18

He forbids them committing adultery ; yet, if what the priests say be true, he himself committed adultery with a poor carpenter's wife ; and, instead of fixing the *horns* in the poor carpenter's head, he, himself, carries them in his hand. } Exod. xx. 14
Hab. iii. 4

He is angry in the morning at the performance of that which he had commanded, the preceding evening, should be done ; yet he says, *I change not!* } Numbers xxii. 20, 22
Mal. iii. 6

One minute he will not go, the next he will go, with the people ; although it is written, that he is of one mind. } Exodus xxxiii. 3, 14
Job xxiii. 13

In short, we find him an illiberal, and an uncharitable god ; one who will not suffer any other god to exist beside himself ; starving all the other gods of the earth, that men may serve him alone. } Exodus xx. 3
Zeph. ii. 11

Sometimes a god of peace ; sometimes a man of war. } Heb. xiii. 20
Exod. xv. 3

Sometimes a god of love ; at others, a god of fury. } 1 John iv. 8
Jer. xxi. 5

Sometimes like a shepherd ; at others, like a bear. } Isaiah xl. 11
1 Sam. iii. 10

Sometimes like a mighty man, at others, like a drunken man. } Isaiah xlii. 13
Ps. lxxxviii. 65

Sometimes like a moth ; at others, like a leopard. } Hosea v. 12
— xiii. 7

Sometimes like the satyr in Æsop's fable, blowing both hot and cold. } 2 Sam. xxii. 9
Job xxxvii. 10

Sometimes like a devil, going about like a *roaring lion*, devouring all he can catch. } Peter v. 8
Hosea xi. 10
— xiii. 8

One that cannot be trusted, because he revealeth secrets. } Dan. ii. 28
 One who tolerates bigamy, slavery, and emasculation. } Deut. xxi. 15
 } Joshua ix. 27
 } Isaiah lvi. 4, 5
 One who has cattle on a thousand hills; yet is always borrowing from his needy creatures. } Psalm l. 10
 } Prov. xix. 17
 One who is a spirit, (John iv. 24,) that hath neither flesh nor bones; (Luke xxiv. 39;) yet he is described as having a head, (Isaiah lix. 17,) with hair, (Dan. vii. 9,) face, (Jer. xvi. 17,) eyes, (Prov. xv. 3,) nose, (Isaiah lxi. 5,) mouth, (ibid lv. 11,) lips, (ibid xxx. 27,) ears, (Psalm xxxiv. 15,) tongue; (Isaiah xxx. 27;) besides feet, (Ezek. xliii. 7,) hands, (Numb. xxi. 17,) arms, (Jer. xxi. 5,) fingers, (Psalm viii. 3,) loins, (Ezek. i. 27,) heart, (Gen. vi. 6,) bowels, (Jer. iv. 19,) blood, (Acts xx. 28,) organs of generation, (John iii. 16,) and back *parts*; (Exod. xxxiii. 23;) possessing a soul, (Isaiah i. 14,) with all the passions, sensual desires, appetites, powers, and faculties, which are found in the human body!

Although never bound 'prentice to any trade or calling, yet he professes to be a gardener, (Gen. ii. 8, Isaiah xli. 19,) a tailor, (Gen. iii. 21,) a *god* midwife, (ibid xxix. 31, ibid xxx. 22,) a house builder, (Exod. i. 21,) a draughtsman, (ibid xxv. 9,) a butcher, (Isaiah xxxiv. 6,) a grave digger, (Deut. xxxiv. 6,) a schoolmaster, (Isaiah liv. 13,) a stone mason and graver, (Exod. xxxii. 16,) a potter, (Isaiah lxiv. 8,) a doctor, (Jer. xxx. 17,) a threshing instrument maker, (Isaiah xli. 15,) a barber, (ibid vii. 20,) a cook, (Acts x. 15,) and slave dealer, (Joel iii. 8.) Besides an instructor of ploughmen, threshers, (Isaiah xxviii. 26—29,) and candlestick makers, (Exod. xxxi. 6—8.)

He is not only a murderer, (Exod. xii. 29,) a tyrant, (Jer. xiii. 13, 14,) a liar, (Numb. xiv. 30,) a fool, (1 Cor. i. 25,) a deceiver, (Ezek. xiv. 9,) and a blackguard, (Gen. xx. 18,) but he is a *consuming fire*, (Heb. xii. 29.) Therefore, as Paul has informed us, that it is a *fearful thing to fall into his hands*, (ibid x. 31,) the sooner, I think, that we get rid of him the better. For what indulgence or mercy can we expect to receive from one, who would not spare his only begotten son!

It appears, from this description of the god of the Jews, that they have made their god exactly in their own image. And, no doubt, had those Jews found themselves in the shape of an elephant, they would have given him a proboscis or trunk, with a tail, and all things pertaining to an elephant.

Orthodoxy.—The most exact description of *orthodoxy* I have ever seen, is that said to be given by Dr. Fothergill, a physician, and quaker preacher of England. As he was a noted man, multitudes went to hear him preach. According to common practice of that order of people, he sat some time in silence. He then rose, looked round on the assembly, and thus addressed them: "My friends, I have been thinking of one word of *three syllables*, and that one word is, *Orthodox*." Here he paused for some time, and then proceeded to say, "And—my friends, I have been thinking of one word of *three syllables*, which explains it, and that word is "*uppermost*." He proceeded no farther, but sat down; the assembly

separated, and went to their homes. Some at first complained of going so far to hear but two words; but afterwards, it was agreed that the doctor delivered a very great and true sermon, and one easy to remember.

That this is a just explanation of *orthodoxy*, is plain from the history of former years. When the *catholic religion* prevailed above all other systems, and the bishop of Rome was considered god upon earth, this was *orthodox*, or uppermost; when the English threw off the catholic power, set up for themselves, and established *episcopacy*, the thirty-nine articles; killed and banished heretics; *episcopacy* was *orthodox*, or uppermost. When *presbyterianism* prevailed over *episcopalianism*, and was established by law, this was *orthodox*. When the *trinitarians* had more power than *Arians*, that was *orthodox*; but when *Arianism* prevailed, that was *uppermost*.

In this country, no denomination has any preeminence above another, by law; and here any denomination, who think they are more righteous than others, may call themselves *uppermost* whether others think so or not. According to what is said, there is now considerable *orthodoxy* among us. We have now, *orthodox* meeting houses—*orthodox* ministers—*orthodox* sermons—*orthodox* prayers—*orthodox* hymns and singing—*orthodox* Bibles—*orthodox* tracts—*orthodox* magazines—*orthodox* missionaries—*orthodox* revivals—*orthodox* conversations, &c. We may yet have *orthodox* books, printers, tavern keepers, and *orthodox* horses and carriages; as whatever is uppermost is *orthodox*.

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered in the Temple of Arts, William street, on Sunday (tomorrow) the 23d March, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued, at 3 o'clock.

THE CORRESPONDENT

Is published at No. 15 Chamber street, New York, (where communications are to be addressed.) Terms three dollars per annum, payable in advance.

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George H. Evans, Printer, No. 264 Greenwich street, New York.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 10.

NEW YORK, MARCH 29, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MORAL COURAGE.

Mr. Editor—I cannot recollect any event of public concern, which has occurred within my remembrance, so gratifying to me as the establishment of the *Free Press Association*, and a periodical paper at New York, for the concurrent and beneficent object of emancipating our brethren from the oppressive mental bondage of Jewish and Christian Idolatry and delusion. I admire the enterprise not only for its philanthropy, but also for its courage and magnanimity, in besieging this strongly fortified foe to human happiness, under such a disparity of forces, except having Truth and Reason on your side.

Some time ago I observed a paragraph in a *Christian* newspaper, stating that it was not generally known that a paper was publishing in New York with the object of “casting contempt on the Bible and the believers of it.” I have examined two volumes of your numbers in order to ascertain whether the whole of this assertion is founded upon truth. I have found nothing in them to justify the latter part of it. As to the first charge, as the Bible undoubtedly contains more barefaced and impious blasphemy and falsehood than any other book within my knowledge, I have but one objection to *casting contempt* on it, and that is, that believers, viewing it as a holy messenger from God, are apt to be shocked with the least indication of ridicule towards a kind of household God which they have been taught to adore, by parents, priests, nurses, and neighbours, from infancy. The subjects of these illusions, therefore, will regard any attempt to remove them, with horror and repugnance, unless accompanied with respectful delicacy and candour.

With respect to *casting contempt on the believers of the Bible*, the declarations of Mr. Jennings, in his oration, vol. 1. p. 375, of the *Correspondent*, that “we should ever bear in mind that those who avowedly differ from us differ honestly,” &c.; that “it is the system, not the believers in it that we wish to see annihilated, &c.” is a sufficient refutation of the ungenerous charge. Selfish Unbelievers have more reason to complain of contempt than honest believers. “How contemptible must that man feel,” says Mr. Jennings, “who, knowing the danger, [from this ‘hydra superstition,’] will not raise his voice, exert his influence, nor extend his hand, to avert so serious a calamity!” [Thousands, or rather hundreds of thousands are in this predicament.] Persecution and bigotry have many other ways of immolating their victims besides racks and flames. Even the illustrious Franklin, after having like a man faced the most powerful monarch in the world, and nearly disarmed the thunder of its terrors, begged his friend Stiles to screen his aged head from the malignant shafts of superstition by not exposing his doubts as to the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. Even

his illustrious companion in the cause of political freedom, Paine, intended to reserve his attack upon the formidable hydra superstition, as one of the last acts of his life. If Jefferson, the illustrious companion of both, in the same cause, had published his sentiments on Christianity as explicitly as Paine did, it is probable he would have been excluded from the presidential chair, and denounced as a detestable infidel, instead of a good patriot. How many are deterred from volunteering in the cause of truth for fear of the loss of their popularity, or the frowns of friends and relatives, or loss of employment, &c. &c. How far this kind of cowardice is justifiable is difficult for one to decide for another, or even for himself. It might have been justifiable formerly, but perhaps is not at the present period. Circumstances are changing, some for the worse and some for the better. The managers of the immense engine of Christian domination, are continually and cunningly contriving and putting in motion auxiliary machines. The sun of knowledge and reason is also rising, and, in my opinion, now is the appropriate time for all who have felt its genial light and warmth to sally forth boldly and fearlessly, under its glorious banner, and share its joyful rays by *reflection*, with all who do not obstinately shut their eyes and ears against them. Delay is dangerous!!

For reasons, which I think are sufficient, I am not yet ready to present myself either personally or nominally, but wishing to contribute what I can, consistently with circumstances, towards the progress of your beneficent undertaking, I send, in company with this, extracts of a letter, which I wrote to a valued friend ten years ago, and which you are at liberty to publish if you think proper.

A VOTARY OF TRUTH.

Feb. 24th, 1828.

EXTRACTS OF THE LETTER REFERRED TO BY "A VOTARY OF TRUTH."

January 25, 1818.

My dear Friend—I have not forgotten that you several times, and particularly when about to leave me, expressed much solicitude concerning my sentiments on religion. Whenever I am addressed on this subject in a candid and friendly manner, I feel bound to reply with correspondent sincerity and ingenuosity. You probably recollect that I assured you unreservedly of my inability to comprehend the prevailing ecclesiastical dogmas; not only from their physical but moral aspect. You kindly presented me with a bible, and enjoined it on me to seek the aid of divine wisdom, that I might attain a correct understanding of it.—I have done so, and hope not in vain.

It is impossible for me to attach to that being who created and sustains the universe, any lesser attributes than those of omnipotence, and the highest degree of intelligence and excellence. The collection of tracts and poems, composing the bible or book, represents his character, in many instances, as possessing very opposite qualities. These books were written in ages of general ignorance superstition and barbarism, and they describe the Deity as if he were a powerful human monarch, giving himself up to the influence of the most savage passions; such as ferocious anger and vengeance, wanton cruelty:—and *repentance*, which implies the consciousness of having committed ERROR. When I contemplate the motives, passions, and actions, imputed to him by many of the Jewish writers in whose

récitals we are required to yield implicit confidence, I cannot help shuddering at the blasphemous audacity of which man is capable; and my heart is filled with anguish at beholding, comparatively, the whole human race wandering in the horrible labyrinths of error and delusion, and excluded from the felicity of knowing the will and amiable character of their common Parent. I rely on your candor to pardon my freedom, and on your honor and fidelity to receive what I say as exclusively between you and myself, at least in respect to my name.—Yet will the last throbs of my heart be doubly embittered when my body must be resolved into its elementary materials, and my soul must return to the divine fountain from which it emanated, if I shall have it to recollect that I have neglected, through fear of persecution, to develope to my fellow-creatures, at some suitable period, the cruel delusion which enslaves their understandings, and devours a vast proportion of the products of their bodily labor. However extraordinary it may appear to you and to my countrymen generally, it is a fact, that my solicitude for the mental happiness of my children is so much greater than for their prosperity in respect to property, that for a large estate I would not consent that their tender minds should be smothered and saturated with the erroneous and unworthy conceptions of the divine character, which are dispensed on every sabbath in the most of our churches and places of supposed divine worship.

I admire and revere, generally, the precepts and parables of that philanthropic man Jesus Christ, and shall impress them on the minds of my children.—He was inhumanly butchered for his benevolence and courage, in endeavoring to eradicate the ancient established errors and vices of his countrymen;—the almost uniform fate of the best patrons of mankind. But I can hardly believe my ears, in this apparently enlightened age, when I hear it gravely asserted, on testimony which would be insufficient to authenticate a probable fact, that the great Spirit and Father of immeasurable creation, hath found it expedient, after an unknown lapse of centuries, to perform a secondary act of creative power, in connexion with a *terrestrial material being*—an *animal*!!—with the premeditated design that his immediate and only *personal* offspring should be barbarously murdered, in order to satisfy his *reputed blood thirsty vengeance* and *resentment* against the human family, for misconduct, past and future, resulting from propensities derived from the *reputed* weakness of the first female. Who that has not had it *riveted* on his pliant mind previous to the accession of the reasoning faculty, can conceive that one man while alive and another after death, having bodies composed of perishable ponderous *earthy* ingredients, have been elevated from this globe, and are still existing, in that state, in heaven? The evidence to my senses that these things are not so; and that this earth has revolved round the sun more than one hundred thousand times, is as clear and irresistible as that the numbers 2 and 2 make 4. A living organic devil, a sulphurous flaming *Hell*, and *endless torments* after death, form essential ingredients in the *narcotic ecclesiastical cup* which we are required to swallow;—and Mr. —, “it is a mammoth”!

Merciful God! preserve me from such thoughts and actions as may justify the imputation of so odious a disposition as is unmeritedly attributed to thee. Will the most savage, *revengeful* human monarch on the earth afflict incessant torture on a vanquished enemy, or on a criminal, incapaci-

tated to commit further offence, for five years only? The Saint Hel—ena, to which Napoleon has been banished by his exasperated enemies and conquerors, is a paradise compared with a lake of fire and brimstone. Look at the forgiving and truly Christian clemency* and magnanimity of Damel the African king, who refused to take *vengeance* on an avowed murderous enemy. The only rational end of punishment is reformation, or prevention of crime by its *visible* example. When it exceeds this, it becomes useless cruelty and revenge. It is the teaching of this *ideal* future punishment, which blinds men to the inevitable and *reasonable* punishments allotted to the disobedience of the Creator's laws, which exist, *really*, in their present mode of existence. Under these impressions, how is it possible for me to think as my neighbors do? Why should the believers in *verbal* divine revelation, persecute and scandalize those who cannot, if they desired it, believe what directly contradicts their sober conviction? A cause that wants reproachful epithets to support it, must be deficient in truth and reason. Volney has been falsely and infamously represented in an American *Almanac* as an Atheist. The malignant anathemas continually levelled at the names of these philanthropic champions of civil and religious liberty, Voltaire and Paine, are a disgrace to human nature. Were I positive that the period of my life would extend no farther than two hours, I should feel conscious of performing a most indispensable duty to my Creator, and the greatest possible service to my fellow-creatures, in devoting the last efforts of my voice, to the purpose of warning and imploring them to renounce the delusive, fabulous, ridiculous, and imaginary inventions of men, and seek the knowledge of God through the channels of his *real and visible works*, and the palpable laws by which they are governed. The firmness of my convictions has been already tested by the prospect of immediate death.

I cannot agree to the degrading doctrine of kings, aristocrats and priests,† that ignorance and the terrors of *devils*, hell-torments, ghosts, witchcraft,‡ prophets, enchantment, magic, and mystery, will make men more obedient, better, and happier than knowledge and reason. Neither can I view the triumphs of deception and superstition with an eye of mirth. I am more inclined for weep at them than to laugh at them. Nor can I behold them with that indifference which some have expressed, who are free from their influence themselves, but think it does little or no harm to others who are ensnared with it. Dr. Franklin informed his reverend friend that he did not believe the account of the miraculous origin of Jesus Christ, but that he did not think there was any harm in others believing it. I think that truth has an incomparable preference over fiction in all cases, even with children. The morbid delirium of fanaticism cannot yield that

* The imaginary God of the Christians cannot be a Christian himself, for Christ teaches kindness to enemies.

† It appears that priests sometimes have another object in view, more interesting to them than to their hearers. My wife informs me that she lately heard the following conversation at the dinner table between two Presbyterian clergymen. One of the reverend gentlemen remarked that he did not approve of holding out so much terror as some do, in order to frighten people into religion for fear of hell. "But Mr. —, (replied his guest) we cannot preach without a hell, for we must have a Tophet or the people would give us no money for preaching."

‡ The power of witches as well as of devils is acknowledged in the Bible: for instance the woman of Endor with a familiar spirit, who is asserted to have called forth out of the earth, with her "loud voice" not only a dead man, but also a number of gods. The magicians of Egypt are said to have converted sticks into snakes as well as Moses and Aaron.

pure unadulterated bias which springs from the religion of reason and philosophy. The scheme of deifying Jesus Christ, and representing him as the issue of sexual commerce between the monarch of the Universe and a woman, may be traced to a superstitious custom, which has prevailed among ignorant men from the earliest records of history even to the present time, of imputing some supernatural quality to distinguished men, and particularly the founders of religious sects. Indeed, I cannot discover that Jesus Christ himself claimed the distinction of being physically, literally, and exclusively the "Son of God." I understand him always to speak in this point figuratively and spiritually. More than once he explicitly calls himself the "son of man." When he mentions the Creator under the very appropriate appellation of Father, he frequently ranks the rest of the human family as his brethren, by using the pronoun *our*, as in the commencement of his usual prayer, "Our father," &c. And sometimes he even says, when addressing his audience, "Your Father." We are all, figuratively speaking, the children of God, and those who love and obey him, inherit the greatest portion of his benignant spirit and blessings. My conscience forbids me from aiding or promoting the circulation of the Bible in its present shape. The legends with which it abounds, bearing the imposing character of the pretended sanction of the Deity, tend to confuse, prostrate, and paralyze the understandings of all who want the capacity or courage to discriminate between truth and falsehood. The contagious mental fever of superstition and fanaticism vitiates and debilitates the mind as thoroughly and more incurably than the small pox does the body. No longer ago than yesterday, my sympathy was most grievously wounded, and my regret at the prevailing delusion of men more fully confirmed, on hearing a respectable lady, who is a zealous professor of religion and benevolence, affirm the certainty with which "we know there is a hell," and with apparent exultation, designate a numerous section* of mankind, as the certain victims of its tortures.—And yet I will venture to assert with equal positiveness, that the difference between imagination and reality is such, that if the identical woman were an eye-witness of the supposed torments of only one of the individuals, for only a single week, instead of innumerable millions of years, she would cheerfully sacrifice her estate to procure his or her release.

CHURCH BUILDING.

Mr. Editor—The mania rages so violently for the building of churches, that the mind of every person who reflects on the subject, must be struck with the real cause of such expensive buildings, and the motives of the projectors of these yclept sacred piles. The privileged classes branch forth rapidly into scions, and these young shoots want situations. The war trade is not so prevalent as it was a few years ago; thus, there are hands short of employment that want a pretext for public support; and as the praying trade is now better than the fighting trade, these temples dedicated to the governor of the universe, are to be erected, that these darlings of the system, may receive a stipend without being obliged to labour for their daily bread. Useful labour is too degrading for those who have been taught that they were born to live by other peoples' labour. Work they

* Those who keep slaves.

must not; work they will not; but the work of thousands must be carried on to keep them from working! Expensive buildings must be erected to carry on their delusions, and the pretended holiness of the place keeps the minds of the vulgar from a critical and rational examination of the subject. The people are informed by their spiritual guides that they must approach them with reverence, and enter their sacred places, with awe, as dedicated to him who demands such awe and respect from their hands. They are evidently made to command and inspire veneration from beholders; and the thing has effected its purpose for centuries.

If it were, as the priests represent, that the Lord delights to dwell in these temples made with human hands, why does he suffer them to crumble to pieces and decay? why does he suffer them to be destroyed by the hand of time? The thing is altogether a farce; it is a *hocus pocus* trick to swindle the bulk of mankind of the comforts of this life, with a futile promise to reward them in another! Churches are one source of emolument to the crafty and designing, at the expense of the thoughtless and unwary. They are a mighty engine to play upon the tender feelings and passions of the weak-minded portion of the human race. If the God of nature preferred those buildings to other human structures, he would preserve them from decay; he would not trust them to the care of men who are deputed to superintend them.

The great temple, the universe, suffers no dilapidation. The blue ethereal dome, the stupendous canopy of space, require no repairs. The roof is of a durable structure, and the foundation, with its walls, know no decay. The great luminary lights it up by day, and the numerous chandeliers that bespangle the dome, are perpetually in their attendance upon the night.

It is preposterous, it is presumptuous, to confine the majesty of the universe to a pitiful circumference of space, encompassed by a mouldering pile of materials, composed of brick and mortar, made wholly by the hypocritical trick of a fellow who is dressed in a peculiar garb and cassoc; and who, with a bowl of water in his hand, walks round the place, muttering a few words, besprinkles the earth, and tells the gaping crowd, that by this act he has made the place holy, and fit for the lord to dwell in. Those theological jugglers intimate that they have a method of enlising the lord to be more immediate in his presence and attendance in these consecrated temples, built by human hands, than he is the great expanse of space! They blasphemously arrogate the power of working upon the almighty by their actions, and of influencing him by their speeches!

Fear is the medium of profit in all religious institutions. That passion is played upon by the crafty and designing knaves, as a proper chord to strike for lucrative purposes. The only antidote to enthusiasm is reason; and the only safeguard to imposition is the exercise of that faculty. A monk, or a priest, is as much startled at it as the Catholics say the Devil is at a crucifix.

While the people will suffer these tricks to be played upon them without examination, the delusion will go on, and mankind will continue to be the slaves of terror and superstition, to the amusement and profit of those who are at the bottom of the secret. Educate man, and his fetters will drop from him. These buildings will be converted to laboratories and lecturing rooms

on science, morality, and the knowledge of things useful to the human race. Then will that slavish fear be banished from the minds of men ; that fear which reduces them lower than the brutes ; and a priest and a juggler no where be found.

VERITAS.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 117.

Of false Quotations and Predictions in the Gospels.—To encourage the first they had to instruct previous to baptism, it was thought good to quote old prophecies, and to make new ones. In the gospels they quoted old prophecies at random. Matthew, or he who took the name, says that Joseph “dwelt in a city called Nazareth ; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, He shall be called a Nazarene.” No prophet had made use of these words, Matthew wrote therefore at random.

Luke dares to say, chap. xxi., “And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars ; the sea and the waves roaring. Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. For the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled.” The generation passed away, and if nothing of this kind happened, it is not my fault. Paul says nearly as much about it, in his Epistle to the Thessalonians ; “Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.” (1 Thess. iv. 17.)

Let any one here interrogate himself, whether or not he considers it possible to carry imposture and the stupidity of fanaticism to a higher pitch ? When it was seen that such gross falsehoods had been asserted, the fathers of the church did not fail to say that Luke and Paul had understood by these predictions the destruction of Jerusalem. But, I pray you, what has the destruction of Jerusalem to do with Jesus coming in the clouds, in great power and majesty ?

There is, in the Gospel attributed to John, a passage which shews clearly that this book was not composed by a Jew. Jesus said, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.” This commandment, so far from being a new one, is enjoined in a much more forcible manner in Leviticus, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” (Levit. xix. 18.) In short, whoever will give himself the trouble of reading, with attention, the passages where the Old Testament is quoted, will find only a manifest abuse of words, and the seal of falsehood almost in every page.

Of the End of the World, and the New Jerusalem.—Not only have they introduced Jesus on the scene predicting the end of the world, even during his own life-time, but this was also the fanaticism of all those called apostles and disciples. Peter Barjonas says, in the first Epistle attributed to him, “For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead ; but the end of all things is at hand.” (Peter iv. 6, 7.) In his 2d Epistle, “We look for new heavens and a new earth.” (2 Peter iii. 13.) The first Epistle attributed to John says, formally, “Even now are there ma-

by anti-Christ, whereby we know that it is the last time." (1 John ii. 18.) The Epistle put to the account of Thaddæus, surnamed Jude, announces the same folly: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all." (Jude 14.)

In short, it was this kind of madness which served as a foundation for the other respecting the new Jerusalem which was to descend from heaven. The Apocalypse announced this approaching adventure; all the Christians believed it. New Sibylline verses were written, in which this Jerusalem was predicted; this new city even made its appearance, and the Christians were to dwell in it for a thousand years after the conflagration of the world. It descended from heaven forty nights successively. Tertullian saw it himself. The day will come when every honest man will say, Is it possible that men have spent their time in refuting this tale of a tub?

Behold the opinions that caused half the earth to be ravaged! Behold what has given principalities and kingdoms to hypocritical priests, and which, in all Catholic countries, still precipitates simpletons into the dungeons of a cloister?

It is by means of these spider-webs that they have twisted the cords that bind us, and they have found out the secret of transforming them into chains of iron! Great God! Is it for such fooleries that Europe has weltered in blood, and that Charles the I. died on the scaffold! O destiny! When a parcel of half Jews wrote their dull impertinences in barns, did they perceive that they were preparing thrones for the abominable Pope Alexander VIth. and for this brave villain of a Cromwell?

Allegories.—THOSE whom we call fathers of the church, adopted a trick singular enough to confirm those who were preparing to be baptised in their new belief. In the course of time, they found disciples who reasoned a little, and adopted the plan of teaching them that all the Old Testament is only a type of the new. The piece of scarlet cloth which the prostitute Rahab hung out at her window to avert the spies of Joshua, signifies the blood of Jesus Christ shed for our sins. Sarah, and her servant Hagar, blear-eyed Leah and beautiful Rachel, are the synagogue and the church. Moses lifting up his hands when he gave battle to the Amalekites, is evidently the sign of the cross, for we are exactly in the shape of a cross when we stretch out our arms to the right and to the left. Joseph sold by his brethren is Jesus Christ. The kisses given on the mouth of the Shulamite, &c. in Solomon's Song, are visibly the marriage of Jesus Christ with his church. The bride had then no dowry; at that time she was not well established.

The people did not know what to believe; no dogma was yet precisely agreed upon. Jesus had written nothing. What a strange legislator must that man have been whose hand did not trace a single line! This made it necessary to write; they then abandon themselves to this good news; to these gospels, to these acts of which we have already spoken, and all the Old Testament is turned into allegories of the new. It is not surprising that Catechumens, fascinated by those who wished to form a party, suffered themselves to be seduced by those fancies that are always pleasing to the people. This plan contributed more than any thing else to the propagation of Christianity, which spread itself secretly from one end of the em-

give to the other, without the magistrates at that time deigning to take any notice of it. What a ridiculous and foolish notion to make the history of a horde of beggars a type and a prophecy of every thing that should happen in the world in all succeeding ages!

To be continued.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MARCH 29, 1828.

New Harmony.—Of all the offensive weapons used by the priesthood, *calumny* is the most effectual. Aware of the public disposition to give credence to an evil, rather than a good report, these ministers of a religion which, they say, inculcates universal benevolence and good will to man, never fail to resort to the most open and foul mouthed abuse of their opponents, when the arguments of the latter prove unanswerable. In no instance has this unprincipled and unmanly course been pursued with greater pertinacity and malevolence, than in the case of Mr. Robert Owen; whose principles have not only been grossly misrepresented, but every engine which falsehood and malice could devise, has been put in operation to blast the fair fame of the residents at New Harmony. Although we have more than once exposed the baseness of these calumniators, such is their inveteracy and deep rooted enmity against the truth, that they continue, even in spite of the clearest evidence, to reiterate their misrepresentations, under the shallow pretence, that all the accounts which have been published in any way favorable to Mr. Owen, or his establishment, have been got up by the friends of the community system, whose prejudices disqualify them from being impartial witnesses. We shall not stop to offer a formal refutation of a sophistry, which, if generally admitted, would deprive the accused, in all cases, of the benefit of the evidence of upright and honest men, when called on to give their testimony. The objection carries with it its own refutation. But, in order to show that the vindication of Mr. Owen, and the exposition of the groundless charges preferred against the people and institutions of New Harmony, rest on other evidence than that of those friendly to the system, we subjoin an extract of a letter, received in this city from a gentleman, no way connected with Mr. Owen, and, as we understand, rather adverse than otherwise to his principles. By this letter it will be seen, that the writer visited the settlement in order to satisfy himself as to the truth or falsehood of the reports in circulation, and which had met his ear in almost every part of the United States, through which he is now travelling for amusement and information. We have no expectation that even this piece of evidence will convince the priesthood, or allay their rancour; for it is the characteristic of a priest never to forgive. But we are satisfied, that due weight will be given to it by every candid and reflecting mind:

New Harmony, January 10th, 1828.

It will surprise you a little to receive a letter from this extraordinary place, wherewith you may perhaps be quite unacquainted. In order to ease your surprise, I must tell you that on my visit to Europe in the fall of 1825, I found in a stationery shop in London, a pamphlet for sale, with a curious title. It contained a brief statement of the German Harmony on

the Wabash, and its position. Its author was R. Owen, and it cost a shilling. My absence from the U. S., my occupation and sickness, prevented me from knowing any thing of the European philanthropist's proceedings, until last summer in Philadelphia. I heard that Mr. Owen had bought the German Harmonites out; assembled a numerous flock on the spot willing to form a philanthropic community; but it was said at the same time, that Mr. Owen had failed completely in his undertaking.

This rumour, Mr. M'Lure's advertisement in the Philadelphia papers, and Mr. Owen's departure from the U. S., could not fail to make impression, even upon the more sober-minded people, and convey the idea of a broken merchant, who, through failure in speculations, gets his estate sold and dispersed. Every one imagined New Harmony to be desolated by anarchy and confusion, a deserted place, abandoned by its ruined and disappointed owner. Under such impressions, I travelled to the western states, to see the land once held forth, with seeming magnanimity, as an asylum for social and generous beings.

On my way towards the west, I found the name of New Harmony an odium in polite society. In Pittsburg, no one would acknowledge to have any dealing with, or agency for New Harmony. The *New Harmony Gazette* was like a proscribed pamphlet, no where visible. Guided by the map only, I arrived at Mount Vernon the 8th of December, 1827. Even Mount Vernon, which owes nearly its existence to New Harmony, seems jealous that any body should frequent this place. I was not a little curious to ascertain what might be behind this cloud of mysteries. A few hours walk brought me here.

It is an extensive and very respectable looking village, with about 1500 acres of the richest soil cleared round about it. A number of large brick buildings gives it an air of solidity, not rural-like. All its houses enlivened by inhabitants, several new buildings going on, and a steam engine at work, prove the slanderers of New Harmony to be invidious impugners.

I have now been here a month, and found this, in all appearance, as virtuous a place, if not more so, than any one in the union where I have resided for any length of time. No fighting and abusive language, nor any degraded females. Here is a public ball every Saturday night, conducted soberly, decently, and cheerfully, until 10 o'clock, when every thing is quite. The ladies dance, generally speaking, better here than any where else on this side of New York. Here is less apish politeness, less starched gentility, and no religious hypocrisy. Your behaviour gives you admittance to any society, without those fashionable passports called letters of introduction. Bullies and libertines, the stars of the fashionable world, cannot cut any figure here. Such fame raises neither fear nor admiration in New Harmony.

Although I cannot but give you this impartial description of N. H. Society, I do not wish it should convey the idea that I have found any perfection here. No—what I have found is the approach to a rational discipline, becoming the human race. I will therefore advise you, in commercial dealings, or money matters, to be on your guard. It is here like any where else—generous feelings must be sought for with Diogenes' lantern.

Wherein New Harmony differs from any other town, is, that there are none of those establishments, where common sense is proscribed, and

lectures on hypocrisy are given under the imposture of sacred authority ; or where traditionary legends are sold as surety to the dupes of a mercenary fraternity. No broker association, speculating upon your valuables, and none of those low resources for insanity, where you may drown your stupified and confounded senses in ardent spirits, or sleep the remainder of your substance away in the embraces of debauchery. I state this because here is no church ; no masonic lodge ; no bible society ; no bank ; no lottery-office ; no grog shops ; and no unchaste smuggling alleys for young females.

New Harmony is enemy to nobody ; but Messrs. Owen and McLure, the owners of the land, will not grant privileges to any impostors, either word-coiners or fortune hunters. No wonder then, that the sultry flame of calumny should blacken the name of Harmony, while it is powerless to consume the town.

Western Tiller.—It is with great pleasure we have now to state, that a gentleman in this city, of established literary talents, has been invited, by the "Cincinnati Society for Mutual Instruction in Natural Science," to take charge of the *Western Tiller*, and that he intends going westward in a few weeks to enter on his editorial labours. As from our own knowledge of the principles of this gentleman, we are satisfied the *Tiller* will be conducted in such a manner as to render it deserving the patronage of all liberal men, we shall continue to receive subscriptions for it, as formerly. Terms, \$2 per annum, in advance, besides postage.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Divinity.—A cheat, an impostor who forges fables about the gods, and then sells them to fools and mad men ; one who tells whim-whams about Deity, sin, repentance, faith ; making a trade of it for the filthy gain ; a pedler in old scraps, old inventions, old and execrable fables, and underwits them with some sacred name, as quacks do with their nostrums, to make them sell ; a by-word, a bondage to the human mind ; a theme of strife, of war, of evil thinking and worse acting ; a poison to human enjoyment, a scourge to earth, and a curse to heaven.

Music.—The soul of music, ever since the days of Orpheus—glorious days of liberty and sweet sounds—has been suffering an increasing degradation : a republic of music environed Thrace, and shone on the summit of Helicon ; the gods were equal with men ; Olympus thundered with delightful bass ; the valleys of Helicon liquified with soft treble ; gods, men, and beasts of the field, stood round and shared in the equal and trembling harmony.—This was the reign of the republic of music : men laughed, and were merry—the gods laughed with them ; love was equal ; harmony was equal ; music reigned over all. Music was medicine ; it healed the palsy ; it touched the soul—not with the gloom of ebony, but with the fire of eternal day and delight. Men danced ; the gods danced ; all nature danced, and made merry ; no tear but of joy, was shed.—Blessed republic ! a curse

ed usurpation has scathed thy fair dominion ; a plague from darkness has visited thee : this is no other than a chubby nosed impostor, denominated *Orthodox* ; having usurped the dead shoes of the god Orpheus, he has set up for chief chorister. Ye gods ! what a falling off is here, under his vile and ignominious reign all things have become meretricious. The impostor, Orthodox, decrees that the gods are angry with men, and, of course, with beasts ; and that nothing can appease that anger but the setting up of doleful faces, putting on sackcloth, and the making of trifling whining noises, at particular times and places : at which, joyful pleasant sounds are a crime, which the gods, who dearly love good music, will punish with fire and brimstone.—How it happens, that our race have come to believe this falsehood and imposition, it is impossible to divine ; especially as the whole is no less than a money-making scheme. Having believed the fable, the gods are daily insulted with screeching, screaming, bawling aloud, with various other miserable execrable noises, which Orthodox calls music, but which inflict the horrors upon us ; draw our faces into clouds, scowls, and wrinkles ; make us gloomy as a monk ; avaricious as misers ; and hypocritical as priests and Pharisees. These unusual and beastly vices bring on disease, premature old age, and render the present generation fit inhabitants for caves, and fit companions for fools and bigots. Come back, I entreat thee, soul of free and heaven-born music, lighten our heels, and enlighten and soften our gloomy desolate hearts. Come back immortal divine Orpheus, and take from the tyrant, Orthodox, a brutal power, which he employs to degrade our race, to make music a vile trade of the church, and to banish health, and free and social intercourse and enjoyment.

The Jesuits in England and Ireland.—The following account of the Jesuit colleges in Great Britain is extracted from a new work just published, entitled *Ireland in Past Times* :

“ The order of the Jesuits was expelled from England by proclamation of James the First, 1604 ; from Venice in 1606 ; from Portugal, 1759 ; from France, 1764 ; Spain and Sicily in 1767, and totally abolished by Clement the Fourteenth, 1773.

“ This commanding order is now revived. A college is erected in the very centre of England, and in Ireland the order has attained influence : there is a very extensive establishment of them at Castlebrown, in the county of Kildare. In the year 1814, Castlebrown was purchased of Wogan Brown, Esq. by the Jesuits, for a college, at the sum of 16,000 pounds. Only four Jesuits then came from Palermo ; they were Irishmen, educated abroad : each had a peculiar department assigned him. Mr. Kenny, the principal, subsequently passed over to America, to found an establishment there ; he however returned, a Mr. Aylmer being the principal. In 1817 they had two hundred pupils only : but were building additions to accommodate five hundred, besides noviciates to increase the order. In the short space of time since their purchase they had built nearly a little town, at the rear of the college, having their own artisans and tradesmen, all belonging to the order as lay brothers. Many more individuals resorted thither from Italy and from Russia, when the Emperor Alexander banished them from his empire.

The strictest silence is observed by the pupils, who appear not to dare to speak without permission of their tutors : besides the regular pupils there are a number of paupers, whom they teach gratuitously. Their refectory in the new building is eighty feet in length. The dormitories are admirably constructed ; one of them contains one hundred and forty-four beds, placed in squares of sixteen in a square, and built up like pews in a church, so that no pupil can be overlooked. Six of the tutors watch in turns during the night, that not a word may be spoken. The boys have a separate apartment wherein they wash, and in another they dress. In the latter boxes are ranged round, containing brushes, combs, &c. In all the apartments occupied by the pupils, there are private closets, from which every thing passing can be seen and heard, without the boys being suspecting they are watched. They all answer, not to their names but their number, and that is increasing every day from the reputation of the college. They know nothing of their own clothes, but when new ones are required they find them provided, and no inquiry is to be made about them. When the weather is unfavourable they exercise in the cloisters, which surround three sides of the building.

"The correspondence of this society is extensive, and they have succeeded in having a post-office established at Clare, the nearest village to the college. They do not deny being Jesuits, and wear the peculiar habit of their order. Their last general was a native of Poland, named Broniski. A few years since there was an election for a new one, when a deputation from Castlebrown went to Rome to attend. Their general, chosen for life by deputies from different societies, possesses a supreme and independent power, extending to every person and every case. By his sole authority he nominates or removes every officer of the order : in him is vested the sovereign administration of the funds and revenues, which are large ; to his commands every member is required, not only to yield outward obedience, but to resign up his sentiments, will, and inclination :—in fact, mere passive instruments to execute his mandates. There is not in the annals of mankind such a complete despotism, and that not executed over a confined body out over men dispersed throughout the whole earth.

"Every novice who offers himself as a candidate for entering the order is obliged to manifest his conscience to the superior, and is required to confess, not only his sins and defects, but to discover the inclinations, passions, and bias of his soul, and this must be renewed every six months. Not satisfied by thus penetrating into the recesses of the heart, each member is directed to observe vigilantly the words and actions of the novices ; they are constituted spies upon their conduct, and are bound to disclose every thing of importance concerning them to the superior, and these reports are faithfully and regularly transmitted to the general, with the most minute details respecting the character of each person, his abilities natural and acquired, his temper, experience in affairs, and the particular department for which he is calculated. These reports, digested and arranged, are registered, that the general may at one comprehensive view survey the state of the society in every corner of the earth, and be able to choose the instruments which his absolute power can employ in any service for which he sees meet to destine them. It is obvious that this system of profound and artful policy must effect a mighty change in the opinions of those submitted to its action.

"This order have an establishment also at Hardwicke Place, Dublin; and the members frequently preach charity sermons in the several papal chapels in the metropolis. There is a branch society connected with them in another part of Kildare to that we have mentioned. They are very reserved in replying to any questions or inquiries respecting their society, pretending not to hear, else evade: on a visiter inquiring at Castlebrown if they were aided by private subscriptions, the reply of the member addressed was—"That door, sir, leads to such an apartment."

"Their influence is very great: since they settled in the county all Roman Catholic servants are forbidden to attend domestic prayer in the protestant families where they live; and very few are suffered to peruse any books."

Arguments proving that the Christian Religion ruins all those States where it is the Established Religion.

Abridged from a work translated from the French, and first published in 1698.

It is intended by the following 18 arguments to prove, that Christianity causes an annual loss of above 200,000,000 of livres (8,333,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.*) to France alone, and an equally large sum to other States in proportion.*

ARTICLE I.—*Cheats of the Clergy.*

Thirty years ago (1668) this article alone amounted to upwards of £3,000,000 sterling, the items of which are as follows:

1. *Masses*—These are said both for the dead and for the living. For the dead, to deliver their souls, not from Hell, but from a place which they call *Purgatory*. They are also said for the living, to expiate their souls from sins daily committed. In these the sinners themselves assist, but still they pay largely for them. This is the clergy's greatest traffic, and it contributes much to retain the several European Monarchs under the Papal yoke, by means of the multitudes of priests and monks which are harboured in their several kingdoms. These are so many armies, who support the Pope's authority over the souls, bodies, and property of both Kings and people. There are churches where above 50 or 100 such masses are said every day upon a great number of altars, which raises subsistence for a great number of priests and monks, and did formerly maintain a greater number.

It is here proper to be observed, that, to the end they may entertain the greater number of them, at the same time they recommend the mass as the principal part of divine worship, and to oblige the people to frequent the masses every day, the priests are strictly forbidden to say above two *per diem*, except in some privileged places, as in Picardy and Arras, because the parishes there are poor and small; which makes it plain that they have no essential reason why a priest may not say divers masses in one day, but that the Court of Rome was resolved to maintain as many of her pensioners, or life-guard men, at the charge of others, as she could. The Parliament of Paris hath regulated their pay at twelve-pence per mass; and in divers provinces they have not above five-pence or six-pence

* The reader may bear in mind, that this sum was applicable to the state of France upwards of 100 years before the Revolution, consequently, the abuses here stated must have been greatly aggravated many years previous to that event.

a-piece ; which is as good at least, as the pay of horse and foot, though they be more useful, and their calling more dangerous.

Abundance of masses are said for the cure of diseases, both in men and women, children, beasts, and birds, as hogs, dogs, geese, &c. ; as also for a happy journey, safe return of a ship, a happy marriage ; as also for mere trifles, as for the finding again of a lost ring, fork, spoon, &c. : nay, even for success in an assassination, or plot against a Prince or Minister ; also for success in murders, robberies, &c.

In order to increase their revenue derived from the saying of masses, the priests have introduced a custom of playing at dice and cards for masses and prayers, that is, he who loses, pays the priest, who does really, next morning, (as he pretends) sacrifice Jesus Christ for the expiation of the sinner's crimes, how heinous soever they may be. In the time of Pope Leo X. the preachers of indulgences played for the pardon of the sins of towns and cities in Germany. They also get money by these masses another way ; which is, that those who assist at them do many times put money into the box, which all falls to the share of the priests.

Sometimes it happens that a dying person orders 100, 1,000, 6,000, nay, 10,000, to be said for the repose of his soul after his death, for which his heirs pay through the nose. There are very few Roman Catholics who are not guilty of this weakness at their death : but if some of those who understand better, despise these fooleries, their friends who are not so well-informed, are sure to have masses said for them, and pay the priests for their pains : nay, the very poorest of them always take care to have some masses said.

Besides this, there is every year an anniversary, as they call it for most people who have left any estate behind them, or whose friends are well to pass : that is to say, a mass sung for the soul of the deceased, by a great number of priests, sometimes 50 or 100 together ; who must all of them be splendidly treated afterwards, where they usually fuddle themselves, and each of them must have a piece of money besides.

It is, then, upon the account of the great profit which the mass brings to the clergy, that they have made it one of the most essential parts of their worship.

2. *Fraternities.*—*The invention of their fraternities, or brotherhood, is another grand method by which they pillage the people, whom they persuade that whoever enters into the order shall have a share in the merits of the same ; nor do they admit them without a considerable present at first, which they oblige them to repeat from time to time. Sometimes there are people of quality, of both sexes,—nay, even generals of armies, who become so weak, as to desire to die in the habit of these rascally monks, who impose upon them so far as to make them believe that they cannot fail of being saved, and of going directly to Paradise, without touching at purgatory, provided they die in the habit of their order. Many considerable persons in the courts of justice, and abundance of others, are guilty of this weakness, as well as silly women : whence it comes to pass that they serve the order into which they have entered with all their might ; and it may be justly said, that they divide the kingdom into divers factions, who are in a continual conspiracy against God, and the king, and their neighbors : for*

as these different orders subsist and enrich themselves merely by the idolatry, superstition, and ignorance of the people, they foment it as much as they can, and engage in the interests and designs of the Court of Rome, to favour the same against the King and the State; and every one of these orders hate and despise one another, both out of a principle of envy, and because they know one another at bottom; and then their devotionists, who are joined to their fraternities, espouse all their passions, quarrels, and interests.

These monks do likewise persuade abundance of silly women of quality, and others, to enter their very sucking infants into their fraternities, inasmuch, that sometimes we shall see these poor little creatures, muffled up in a monk's hood and casseck, by which the order lose nothing.

3. *Indulgencies*.—Another method made use of by the ecclesiastics, to catch the wealth and substance of the people, is their indulgencies, which they obtain of the Pope from time to time, for some churches or monasteries, which whosoever visits during such a number of days, shall infallibly receive a pardon of all their sins, provided they give bountifully to the said church or monastery; for that is always to be understood.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered in the Temple of Arts, William-street, on Sunday (to-morrow) the 30th March, at 11 o'clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued, at 3 o'clock.

THE CORRESPONDENT

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 11.

NEW YORK, APRIL 5, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CONFLICTING OPINIONS.

Mr. Editor—The priests of every god stand up for their own omnipotent, and write, and lie, and fight for him, through thick and thin. But one thing is worthy of observation amongst the priests; they never doubt the Godhead of their adversary, nor the heaven, nor the hell, nor the being of the soul, nor the hereafter. Thus, keeping up the delusion, they thrive while the confounded multitude are starving.

The Jew, who will not believe that Jesus Christ is his Messiah, and must be damned for that, lays his hand on his book and cries out, "here is the law and the prophets. I believe in this, and the coming of the great day, and in the restoration of the chosen, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the holy temple, and that, with the help of the mighty Jehovah, we shall conquer all nations, subdue all empires, and the lion of Judah shall reign over the prostrate world."

The meek Christian, then, holds up his book and cries out to the Jew, "vile unbeliever, you do not understand that book which you profane by touching. God has hardened your heart, as he did Pharaoh's in the land of Egypt, in the days of your forefathers, that, seeing, ye shall not see, that hearing, ye shall hear and not understand, lest ye might believe and be converted. This is the true book. Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden and I will ease you of your burthen; for my conscience is clear and my hand is ever ready to receive; come and drink of the water of the well of life. I am the word and the way and the good shepherd, saith the Lord Jesus Christ, whom ye crucified on Calvary, between thieves, and on whom your vile mob spat; for this the plough passed over your city, and ye have been outcasts ever since. Yet, still, ye may repent and be saved. This book teacheth all manner of good things—Good people, read this book eternally and read nothing else—give unto your priests, and they will pray that ye may have grace and faith in abundance, and that ye may avoid the temptations of evil, and live truly pious lives, resigned to his will who sends us."

The devout Mussulman, bowing his forehead to the earth and pressing his sacred volume to his bosom, cries out, "hear me, ye infidels, listen to the sacred precepts of the divinity. There is but one God and Mahomed is his prophet. Glory to Allah. Who shall dispute the authority of the Koran, first and last of heavenly productions? Who shall dare to contend with omnipotence? The sword shall destroy him; fire shall consume him; the earth shall reject him, and his ashes shall be cast out of existence. But for you, ye holy, who were elected before all time to believe in and exalt the seal of the prophets, to honour the sent of God; for you, ye happy and blessed, the sacred earth shall bring forth an abundance; ye shall here have all manner of good things, and the immaculate joys of the

celestial paradise are prepared for your reception ; for you, shall the Houris, the unfading daughters of heaven, preserve eternal virginity ; you shall bathe in rivers of milk, scented with the Ottar Gul, and recline on beds of full blown roses, charmed with the seraphic voice of a thousand wives ; under the shade of Almighty goodness shall ye repose for ever."

This is certainly a heaven which a man might live or die for with pleasure. Mahomed knew what would please holy devotees, and his sword and Koran were liberal behests. But the Christians were aware of this, and would not allow him the honour of writing his own book, or of forming his creed and doctrine : hence, they insist, that one of their own monks was the author of this delectable book and fascinating religion. Others say, that the Christian code was a selection from the works of all the old eastern sages, and that there was no such man as Jesus Christ ; but that his name is derived from *Chrisen*, an Assyriac name given to the sun, or from the Greek word *christos*, and, it is clear, that there were no Christians in the first hundred years of what is now called the Christian era. The curious, who search into the records of antiquity, tell us, that the Jews were a horde of wandering gypsies, who were expelled out of Egypt for uncleanness ; who had neither religion nor laws until four or five hundred years after the date of their origin as a people ; and the history which they own, as being a true and authentic memoir of themselves and their forefathers, is most certainly, both as to matter and manner, the very worst sample of historic composition in existence. Such murders, massacres, assassinations, and usurpations, disgrace not the page of any other history, and their sainted psalm singing king, whom they fanatically call a man after God's own heart, bequeathes to his son, the wisest of men, on his death bed, a brace or trio of murders. These are the books on which we must rely ; on these must we fix our faith, and hope for eternal salvation ; on these must be founded our moral, civil, and religious codes, forsooth. These are not merely the greatest efforts of human genius, but the very *ne plus ultra* of divine wisdom !

These are the books and creeds, which men argue about with drawn swords ; for which they burn, hang, and destroy—imprison, rob, and murder one another. These are the books, which we are not to criticize under pain of eternal damnation ! These are the books, which we must not examine, nor doubt their truth. Books which carry falsehood in every page ! Collections of fables, vain tales, improbable traditions, records of cruel inhuman murders, lying stories of impossible miracles, and degrading characters of an omnipotent God, whom the wretches reduce below the meanest earthly tyrant whose deeds would disgrace the worst of the Cæsars ; an immutable God, changeable, fickle, inconstant, cruel, vindictive, revengeful, and unjust, eternally sinning and repenting, creating and destroying. In all, except the creative power, a man of the very worst disposition ! Yet the wretches who pretend to believe in these creeds and abominable books, cry up this idol as the soul of every thing, and the only righteous, all-wise, all-benevolent, and all-just being in or out of existence ; in whom are all the virtues, though he permits evil, vice, the devil, and misery, to reign paramount over this poor world, just to amuse himself in tempting us mortals !

VERITAS.

THE INDIAN'S LETTER.—NO. I.

Christianity.—So much, and so much to the purpose, has been said against Christianity, that it seems rank cowardice to draw a pen against it. But though confuted, confounded, decried, and cursed; though proved to be a vile, bungled fabrication, scouted by sense, reason, and understanding; though void of all historical proof, or the smallest degree of rationality; though accounted an irrational, absurd superstition, and known to be the spawn of fraud and ignorance, begotten on ancient traditional superstitions, and disseminated for the worst of purposes among ignorant, credulous people, who were slaves in body and mind: yet, for all this, fraudulent knaves, ignorant fanatics of the present day, preach it up to unthinking people, who swallow the ridiculous tale with all the absurd and disgusting nonsense which the ignorant hypocritical teachers of the wretched, lying doctrine can add to it. The deceit and hypocrisy of the various priests of the numberless sects stand manifest in all their proceedings. They decry by hearsay all who presume to question their creed, to examine their principles, to investigate their origin, or to doubt their authors or authority. With them it is a maxim, never to read any thing which is written against them, and to warn their disciples against perusing the works of an infidel author. This has very much the look of bad men and women scolding—none mind what the other says, but all keep scolding away. Some of the writings of the gravest of these determined, obstinate Christians, are truly laughable, if not worse than their mere assertions followed: but when they gravely vouch falsehoods for facts, and thereby establish a foundation for future frauds, it becomes us to stop them in the act, to detect their iniquity, and shame them on the spot. Such, however, is their sanctified impudence, and impenetrable ignorance, that they blush not, and set sense, reason, and argument at defiance.

One thing surely is plain to the ignorant and the most learned; none of us know any thing about the formation of this world, or when it was made. Here we are all alike, except the most stupid, ignorant, fanatic Christian: he knows to a moment of time, when the vast globe was launched from the heavenly slip, and put in motion; or, rather, anchored in the heavens; for his sacred book tells him, that it stands still, and that the sun, moon, and stars all dance round it. This one single instance ought to destroy the authority of the Bible, as it certainly would that of any other book; but the infatuated can believe nothing but falsehood. The accounts of massacres, and of the destruction of cities and nations, in the Bible, which fill the heart of man with horror, pity, and indignation, only gratifies the feelings, and raises the brutal joy of the infatuated fanatic. One says very gravely, just as if he had been present and had seen the transaction, "4004 years before the birth of Christ the world was made, on the 19th of October, O. S." And as they have learned some little time ago, they say it was put in motion at 7 P. M. and so continued until the 29th in A. M. when it was destroyed by God Almighty, who drowned it, and repeopled the earth again by Noah and his family. One tells, very gravely, the year, the month, and hour of the day, when an old man was taken up into heaven in a fiery chariot. This was too good a story to be lost, so it is again repeated, and Elijah has the fiery chariot and fiery steeds sent for him, and up he goes to heaven. One relates, that a few priests made themselves trumpets of rams'

horns, went blowing them about a great city until they blew the walls down, and then entered and destroyed all the defenceless inhabitants. But of all the ridiculous lies and absurdities which they tell, that of God Almighty sending Moses and Aaron, like two conjurors, to frighten and plague poor Pharaoh and the Egyptians, is the most absurd, stupid, and inconsistent. It exhibits its authors as men at once childish and depraved; for, to a moral man, the whole proceedings of the mighty Jehovah and the favoured Jews are captious, cruel, tyrannical, fraudulent, and unjust. However, none now vouch for the truth of this story, or attempt to support it, except the grossly ignorant, the insidious deceiver, the lying priest, or his credulous disciple.

Then comes the story of the miraculous conception, and the birth of young God Almighty! Here our indignation rises at the impostors who could fabricate such a story, have the impudence and effrontery to tell it for a fact, and insist on our eternal damnation if we do not believe every word of the absurd narrative. Heavens! what is man, that he can either make, tell, or believe in, such a story? But here we may pause a little and examine this celestial or tale! Let us suppose for a moment, for argument sake, that such a thing was probable; and did actually happen; that the Almighty begot himself on a young woman, who was another man's wife, and was born into this world for the salvation of men; that is, to deliver men or their souls from the evil spirit, Satan; that his birth was foretold hundreds of years before it happened; that it was announced at the moment by divine angels, or messengers from heaven; that wise men from the east came and paid homage to the new-born God; that the old Almighty God owned him out of the heavens, and said, "*this is my only begotten, in whom I am well pleased*;" that the man-God served his apprenticeship to a carpenter, and wrought at his trade until he was thirty years of age; that then he commenced field-preacher, and, after strolling about the country, was taken up and tried for the double crime of sedition and blasphemy; that he was found guilty of one or both charges, and crucified between two thieves; and that he was buried, and rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven. Now, suppose we admit all this, we must naturally ask, for what was all this done—for what end? We see no benefit to society arise from this divine sacrifice, and we have not the smallest proof that such transactions ever took place. The people, who were alive and present, did not believe a word of it—they have made no kind of record either of him or his miracles. The learned, the wise, and the good, are silent on the occasion. The historians and natural philosophers of Rome say nothing about him or his wonders, and some of them were wonder-hunters too. Among the rest, there are Pliny and Seneca, and many others equally curious and still more credulous, yet not one ever writes or speaks a word about the divine Messiah; and what is more, no good has accrued to man, but, on the contrary. No such things as religious persecutions or religious wars were known before the Christian era.

Take it in what sense or light we will, nothing can be more ridiculous, absurd, or childish, than the Christian scheme of human redemption. Such Gods, such Fathers Almighty, such Sons, such Holy Ghosts, such immaculate conceptions and divine incarnations, such miracles, wonders.

and tales, are below the criticism of reason; but may, in some distant period, become the theme of some future curse of Kehama, and entertain man as a fabulous invention.

To be continued.

IMPORTANT EXAMINATION. BY LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Continued from page 153.

Falsifications and supposititious books.—The better to enable them to seduce the uninitiated during the first centuries, they did not fail to state that the sect had been respected by the Romans, and even by the emperors themselves. It was not enough to forge a number of writings which they attributed to Jesus; they also made Pilate write. Justin and Tertullian quote the “Acts of Pilate,” and they are inserted in the Gospel of Nicodemus. Here follow some passages of the first letter of Pilate to Tiberius, which are curious :

“It has lately happened, and I have witnessed it, that the envy of the Jews has drawn upon them a cruel judgment. Their God having promised to send them his saint from heaven, to be their true king, and having promised that he should be the son of a virgin, the God of the Hebrews did really send him while I presided in Judea. The principal Jews denounced him to me as a magician; I believed it; ordered him to be flogged, and then abandoned him to them. They crucified him, put guards round his sepulchre, and he rose again the third day.” This ancient letter is very important, as it shews us that, at that time, the Christians had not yet dared to suppose that Jesus was God. They merely say he was sent from God. If he had then been a God, Pilate, whom they cause to speak, would not have failed to say so. In the second letter he says, that if he had not feared a sedition, perhaps this noble Jew would still have lived. “*Fortasse vir ille nobilis viveret.*” They likewise forged a more detailed account which was attributed to Pilate.

Eusebius of Cæsarea, book vii. of his Ecclesiastical History, assures us, that the woman troubled with the flux, who was cured by Jesus Christ, was a citizeness of Cæsarea; he has seen her statue at the foot of that of Jesus. Round the base there are herbs which cure all kinds of diseases. They likewise give out a pretended edict of Tiberius, to rank Jesus among the gods. They invented letters from Paul to Seneca, and from Seneca to Paul. Emperors, philosophers, and apostles were all put to contribution; it was an uninterrupted course of frauds; some of them merely fanatical, the others political. A fanatical lie, for example, is that of writing the Revelation and attributing it to John, which is only an absurdity; a political lie is that of writing the book of Constitutions, and attributing it to the apostles.

All these supposititious books, all these falsehoods, which have been denominated pious, were put only into the hands of the faithful. It was an enormous offence to communicate them to the Romans, who had scarcely any knowledge of them during the space of two hundred years; thus the flock increased daily.

Impositions of the first Christians.—One of the oldest impositions of these new demoniacs, was the “Testament of the twelve Patriarchs,” and

we still have entire the Greek translation of it by John, surnamed St. Chrysostom. This ancient book, which was written in the first century of our era, is visibly the production of a Christian, because it makes Levi say in the 8th article of his Testament, "The third shall have a new name, because he shall be a king of Judah." This signifies Jesus Christ, who has never been designated but by such like impostures.

They invented the Testaments of Moses, Enoch, and Joseph, their ascension or assumption into heaven : that of Moses, Abraham, Elda, Moda, Elias, Sophonia, Zachariah, and Habakkuk. At the same time they forged the famous book of Enoch, which is the only foundation for all the mystery of Christianity, since it is in this book alone that we find the history of the rebellious angels who had sinned. It is certain, that the writings attributed to the apostles were not composed till after the fable of Enoch, which was written in Greek by some Christian of Alexandria. Jude in his Epistle, quotes this Enoch more than once ; (Jude 14) he reports his own words, and is so destitute of common sense, as to assert that Enoch, who was the seventh man after Adam, had written prophecies.

Here, then, we have two vile impositions well attested ; that of the Christian who invented the book of Enoch, and that of the Christian who invented the Epistle of Jude, in which the words of Enoch are related. There was never a more stupid falsehood. It is useless to enquire who was the principal author of these frauds, which insensibly gained credit ; but there is some probability that it was Hegesippus, whose fables had a great run, and who was quoted by Tertullian, and afterwards copied by Eusebins.

The supposititious letter of Jesus Christ to a pretended king of the city of Edessa, which had not then a king, and the journey of Thaddeus (or Jude) to this king, were four hundred years in vogue among the first Christians.

Whoever wrote a gospel, or undertook to teach his little rising flock, imputed to Jesus discourses and actions which are not mentioned in our four Gospels. It is thus that in the 20th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, Paul quotes these words of Jesus : "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.) These words are not to be found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, nor John.

The travels of Peter, the revelation of Peter, the acts of Paul and of Thecle, the letters from Paul to Seneca, and from Seneca to Paul, the acts of Pilate and the letters of Pilate, are sufficiently known among the learned, and it is useless to rummage among these archives of falsehood and absurdity. They carried their nonsense to such a pitch, as to write the history of Claudia Procula, who was Pilate's wife.

Conclusion.—I conclude, that every sensible man, every honest man, ought to hold Christianity in abhorrence. "The great name of Theist, which we can never sufficiently revere," (Shaftesbury) is the only name we ought to adopt. The only gospel we should read is the book of nature, written with God's own hand, and stamped with his own seal. The only religion we ought to profess is, "to adore God, and act like honest men." It would be as impossible for this simple and eternal religion to produce evil, as it would be impossible for Christian fanaticism not to produce it. Natu-

ral religion can never be made to say, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth ; I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matt. x. 34.) Yet this is the first confession they put in the mouth of a Jew whom they call Christ.

Men are blind and wretched to prefer an absurd and sanguinary sect, maintained by hangmen and surrounded by funeral piles ; a sect which could find no admirers but among those to whom it communicated wealth and power ; a particular sect received only in a small portion of the globe, in preference to a simple and universal religion, which even, by the confession of Christians, was the religion of the human race during the ages of Seth, Enoch, and Noah. If the religion of the first patriarchs were true, certainly the religion of Jesus must be false. Sovereigns have submitted themselves to this sect, thinking they would be more respected by their own subjects, by loading themselves with the yoke which was imposed upon the people. They did not perceive that they made themselves the first slaves of the priests, and in one half of Europe they have not yet been enabled to render themselves independent. And pray what king, what magistrate, what father of a family, would not rather be the master of his own house, than be the slave of a priest ?

What ! The innumerable number of citizens that have been injured, excommunicated, reduced to beggary, killed, and their bodies cast on the highway ; the number of princes dethroned and assassinated, has not yet opened men's eyes ! And when we do open them, we perceive this fatal idol is not yet demolished ! But what shall we substitute in its place, say you ? What ! A ferocious animal has sucked the blood of my relatives. I tell you to rid yourselves of this beast, and you ask me what you shall put in its place ! Is it you that put this question to me ? Then you are a hundred times more odious than the pagan pontiffs, who permitted themselves to enjoy tranquillity among their ceremonies and sacrifices ; who did not attempt to enslave the mind by dogmas ; who never disputed the powers of the magistrates, and who introduced no discord among mankind. You have the face to ask what you must substitute in the place of your fables ? I answer you, " God, truth, virtue, laws, rewards, and punishments." Preach probity, and do not preach dogmas ; be the priests of God, and not the priests of a man.

Magic.—St. Clement of Alexandria relates that Moses killed a king of Egypt by sounding the name of God in his ear, after which he brought him to life again by pronouncing the same word. St. Clement is very exact ; he cites his author, the learned *Artapanus*. Who can impeach the testimony of *Artapanus* ? Nothing tended more to retard the progress of the human mind than this profound science of error which sprung up among the Asiatics with the origin of truth. The universe was brutalized by the very art which should have enlightened it. Of this we have great examples in Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, &c. &c.

Origen, in particular, expressly says, " If, when invoking God, or swear by him, you call him *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, you will, by these words, do things the nature and force of which are such that the evil spirits submit to those who pronounce them ; but if you call him by another name, as *God of the roaring sea*, &c. no effect will be produced. The

name of *Israel* rendered in Greek will work nothing ; but pronounce it in Hebrew with the other words required, and you will effect the conjuration." The same Origen has these remarkable words :—"There are names which are powerful from their own nature. Such are those used by the sages of Egypt, the Magt of Persia, and the Brahmins of India. What is called *magic* is not vain and chimerical art, as the Stoics and Epicureans pretend. The names *Sabaoth* and *Adonai* were not made for created beings, but belong to a mysterious theology which has reference to the creator ; hence the virtue of these names when they are arranged and pronounced according to rule," &c.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1828.

Opening Address, spoken before the Society of Free Enquirers, at Military Hall, New York, on Sunday, Feb. 24th, 1828. By Henry A. Fay.

It is with a feeling of mingled joy and regret that I rise to address you—regret, that such an institution, as the one we this day meet to lay the foundation of, is necessary for the security of our dearly bought freedom, and even our lives. If I could, I would fondly persuade myself, and you, too, that under the United States government our fellow-citizens enjoy complete liberty of speech and action, to the very extent where licentiousness bars farther progress, by its own hideous features and threatenings. I would fain recommend that the cares of state be left to those highly gifted individuals who say they are fitted for the endurance ; while unassuming others should yield obedience to the laws made for their good. But the best men are led into temptation by possessing unlimited power. While our magistrates, divine teachers, and soldiery watch over the people the people must also keep watch.

There are men in this country who have vanity and love of power. They lust for every luxury, and would risk drowning in an ocean of dissipation, so that they could, like the pernicious vermin on the coast of Norway, called the lemming, after desolating fields of verdure, but be allowed to swim out among the billows, as far as their strength held, and then sink. These persons look upon other men as their beasts of burden ; they will not herd with the vulgar animals ; and laugh in their faces when they cajole them out of their votes, with set, unmeaning, canting professions of truth, honesty, patriotism, piety, and devotion to the people. My regret is that such things are, and that hypocrites, designing hypocrites, assume masks of every kind, to stab us, when we look to them for protection. These wretches are found in every rank and office. Iniquity is not exclusively the tenant of our debtors' jails, penitentiaries, houses of refuge, bridewells, state prisons ; and every murderer does not die under the gallows. Misery is not confined to the poor, to savages, or to convicted felons.

I have heard and seen a most wonderful anomaly. I beheld a judge, presiding on an elevated seat, in this very city, to try one of his fellow-citizens accused of violating the laws, which laws that judge had violated : ay, that judge had violated the very prohibition, for the infraction of which he was bold enough to call to account the prisoner at his bar. I heard that

judge sentence him to prison, to be the fellow-convict of the most profligate, filthy, abandoned felons—immured within the same loathsome dungeon vapors. I saw the credulous crowd of “stupid starrers” gazing at that judge with a look of adulation, but sneering at the illiterate victim, the bungling, unfortunate, humble imitator of that literary, legal judge. The judge had once fought a duel, (to which, probably, he owed his elevation;) the prisoner, though he could not write a correct sentence, had blundered upon something which the equitable judge had construed into a challenge of one of the poor fellow’s comrades to fight a duel. The whole court laughed at the idea of such a creature contending for honour, before he learned orthography; nevertheless, he was sent to bridewell for it. The lamentable truth is but too glaring, that many basest of men wheedle the people into giving them the highest stations in the departments legislative, executive, judiciary; also in the pulpit, and also in *public opinion*.

But, as I said, my regret is mingled with joy on this occasion—joy, that we are assembled at this time, to congratulate each other upon the auspicious commencement of another campaign against the foes of human happiness. While I speak, the commingling forces of hail, rain, and snow are making their last demonstration, preparatory to breaking up their camp and retreating. The snows of winter are yielding up our soil to the genial smiles of spring, and vegetation wakes from its annual sleep. The buds will soon bedeck the now naked bushes; the foliage will tremble on its tender pinions, as if thrilling with ecstasy beneath the amorous zephyr’s warm embrace; and there will be music in the grove, sweet warblings from a thousand little feathered songsters of the air, as they feel the kindness of Nature stealing gently through their veins. Would that the human race—my fellow-creatures, without excepting a man, woman, or child, might also henceforth be as smiling as the flowers, and as gay as the lark, which skims, unrestrained and innocent, along the bosom of the pure liquid we breathe! Alas! there are inevitable incidents which at present oppress us—*anxiety, disappointment, vexations innumerable, sickness—death.*

It does appear to me that there is a *book*, which teaches the reader how to avoid many sufferings; by which the poignancy of pain may be soothed, almost into indifference, and the enjoyments of life may be increased in number and zest: by which the greatest evil of *death*, may be avoided. Imagine not that I rave. I do not literally mean that man will not die, but that he may be taught to smile at the approach of death; that he may provide himself with an ingredient calculated to sweeten the bitterest cup which fate forces to his lip. Study Nature. Its volume is every where.

I do not say that every person can at will discard prejudice from the mind, and commence an education, improving daily in happiness by following the injunctions of those immutable principles which are written on every atom of matter. But I can say that my life has been more devoted to study and observe the operations of Nature, than to the accumulation of dollars and cents in my coffers; and it appears to me that the same controlling qualities existing in the universe, which have formed certain particles into my present identity, have provided every thing necessary for my wants; that the only exertion necessary to satisfy all healthy desires,

is an exertion of faculties of body and mind in the most pleasurable method they are capable of.

I hear people anticipate the loss of a fortune, as if the power of fruitfulness was about to be annihilated from the earth. There are savages, whom civilized men habitually call "poor, ignorant, wretched beings—naked, houseless, freezing, starving." How do we reconcile this lamentation with the common expression of travellers, added most inconsistently, that nevertheless these savages seem to be the happiest people in the world. Their whole business appears to be a variety of sports; they rely entirely on a Great Spirit to provide them with food; and they meet the occurrences which are natural, as sickness, pain, and death, with resignation. They are free from numberless petty vexations, incident to effeminate, refined society; they eat when hungry, and then only, and bring to every gratification of every desire the most exquisite capacity for enjoyment. They always appear to be careless, hardy, happy, and apparently never discover, until money and missionary show them, by the light of the gospel and the sun of science, how truly wretched and miserable they are.

I hear many complaints about sickness and want, but I do not know what remedy there is, while the citizens' habits are so effeminate; the world cannot supply their wants. Man is an animal, whose physical formation has rendered it essential to his health of body and mind, that his thoughts and actions should be free as the wind; that like the aborigines who follow impulse, he should spend the greater part of his time in the open air, and partake of those simple dishes, which are given to him spontaneously by the earth, air, and waters. It would seem as if gold was the idol of civilized man's idolatry; to which must be sacrificed comfort, peace of mind, sanity of body, the welfare of the multitude; ay, even truth and virtue. There is a regular order throughout matter, time, and circumstance. Happiness is generally surrendered in proportion as the people are insincere, unkind, dishonest, indolent, luxurious, avaricious, and in the habit of restraining themselves from indulging in those manual spirits, which seem to the learned and the fashionable inconsistent with the dignity of gentility.

Fashionable pursuits of the present time do not seem to produce, to those engaged in them, the utmost satisfaction which human senses are capable of receiving. A whole night is passed, seated at a card table, while deleterious drugs and liquors are taken to preserve the enervated frame from complete exhaustion. At a late hour in the next forenoon, or at noon, the body rises from the effeminating couch, and enters upon the dull details of sedentary business, to procure more money for insipid indulgences; again comes night and gambling. I do not wonder, when I hear almost every one about me complaining of the utter tastelessness of all human enjoyments.

Is it surprising, that mental cowardice causes men to tremble at the frown of a being of the same species, at a bauble crown, a tinselled mitre, the empty sounds of pope, king, duke, bishop, priest, reverend? I have looked at a picture, representing a stupid creature, whose bloated form burdens a chariot, around it gentlemen of talent and education, with their hats off, rushing forward and straining their eyes to see, their throats to shout the praises, of a fellow-being, whom her ancestors by fraud and murder have

acquired for the title of duchess—and I felt myself degraded in thinking that I was of the same species: I was disposed to hold in contempt even our boasted reason. Luxury, ignorance, superstition, have thus debased what has been called an image of the Almighty Creator and Ruler of the Universe.

There are two classes of people on this planet; the one are denominated superstitionists, the other, free enquirers. The first are trying to contract their intellects into the smallest possible compass. Their motto is *faith*. The latter class endeavour to expand from day to day the dominions of knowledge, and take for their guide *reason*. The superstitionists say, "reason is blind and leads men astray; a revelation directly from heaven is required to teach truth;" and so, follow every professing prophet. The free enquirers believe nothing which will not endure the test of reason, ridicule, time, and which is not reconcilable with all known facts. Look at the superstitionists, shrinking and abasing his form, prostrate upon the ground, at the foot of a little crucifix, the manufacture of a mechanic, or shaped by an illiterate carpenter from a chip of wood. Behold a free enquirer, the philosophical Franklin: as if playing with a harmless child, which fears the rod of correction; see this free enquirer; sporting with and by his rod awing into insignificance the terrible lightnings.

The free enquirer enjoys some pleasure. The student of Nature may be banished to a territory where art never trod, and there he can find the originals of which art is but the mere imitator. Does he wish for pictures? There is the natural landscape. In the sky are colors no paint can rival; the richest plumage clothes the dwellers of the air, and every beauteous hue glows on the flowers. The hill, valley, rock, darksome glen, tangled thicket, and secluded dell, offer every variety of tint, and a thousand variegated forms, to the delighted eye. There are the placid lake, the purling brook, the foaming torrent, the tumbling cataract. The sea rolls in majestic surf, dashing up along the pebbled, shelly beach; its foam climbs the huge precipice; in its sudden bound, as it leaps from the great body of waters around, an instant changes its dark hue and heavy substance into dazzling whiteness and feathery spray; it seems as if it spurned its former humble existence as a billow, when it is winged to be a tenant of the air, and assumes momentarily the snowy emblem of innocence and purity; the next instant it is again a dark wave, and mingles with its former unwieldy kind. That is nature's painting; but it has also motion, life, sound, vast expanse, and the bosom swells with the grandeur of the scene; and that is wholesome luxury. There is also music in every breeze, and variety in every thing. The fishes of the sea, the fowls, the quadrupeds, the fruits, vegetables, are furnished to man, and the exertion which will enable him to obtain them gives him health and recreation.

Many of our annoyances, it seems to me, should be attributed to the effects we yet feel, caused by that servitude which our forefathers freed themselves from. It requires a long time to elapse after emancipation, before the slave can unshackle his habits from the use of thralldom. We are yet in chains. Indeed, our political foes have been ignominiously driven from our soil, by the struggling through too bloody wars. A wide ocean is our bulwark, against that combination of despots, "The Holy Alliance." Our rocky coast is guarded by the sentinel storms, which terribly howl

along the billow. Yet we are constantly rubbing bright our long worn fetters, which would ere this have rusted from our limbs, had not a few selfish wretches denounced freedom of thought, lest freedom of action should follow.

It is rumored, that an "evangelical party," (the cognomen I believe it has assumed; its leaders "evangelists,") in this country, has grown so powerful, that it is counting up its numbers, and rallying its forces, preparatory to a speedy union of church and state; that reason will be dethroned, and in its stead substituted the frenzied fantasies of a bigoted priesthood; that fanaticism is about to be the imperial dictator to republican America; that the darkest hour of freedom's despair is now come. There are deep murmurings, which seem to indicate an approaching moral revolution. Many conjecture, that the twilight of hope may ere long glimmer through our dungeon grate.

When night from her "ebon throne" sways unchallenged "her leaden sceptre" o'er our land; at the very acme of her power, in the single moment of her blackest gloom, the foundations of her place are crumbling. The ideal instant when it is midnight, 'tis morn.

It is midnight—it is morn!

Human reason wakes from its long sleep—the sleep of ages. Although in every century there have been solitary sages, crying out to a slumbering, besotted people, awake! although small bands have breasted tyranny in every nation; yet history does not tell of a time when, as now, there have been so many presses, investigating all existing institutions, their origin and utility.

The government of Great Britain, at last, permits free enquiry in every department of knowledge. Legislature in this country has very lately proclaimed, that the candidate's *opinion* shall not be the test of any person's title to respect, in the hall of Justice. Investigation is abroad. Woe unto impostors, hypocrites, knaves, who are luxuriating upon the spoil that their impudence has extorted from credulous simplicity. The mummery of superstition and aristocracy is sinking into a subject of ridicule. The long faced bigot, who arrogates a divine mission, and threatens with consignment to a devil and his brimstone forces the congregation of dupes, whom their own idol divine laughs at in his sleeve, when he calls them *his flock of sheep*, is himself the cause of mirth to the multitude.

Behold (as some of us have seen) heraldry, freemasonry, the pride of birth, kingcraft, sacerdotalcraft, demonocracy, and demonology, with all their respective trumpery of emblazoned heraldic quarterly in the first grand quarter, Mars, three lions passant guardant, in pale Sol, the St. George killing the dragon, the bloody hand in the field, the black eagle volant and the thunderbolt, the masonic right worshipful grand master, noble blood, most catholic king, right reverendship, and his holiness; and last, not least, his Satanic Majesty: all, all these high and mighty powers concentrating all their essences into a painted picture; into the honor of gracing an American shop window, for the sport of republican citizens, as a *laughable caricature*. Be free! Scrutinize every habit, custom, maxim, doctrine, character. Study to clear the mind from every injurious prejudice.

To be continued.

Liberal Principles!—The rapidity with which liberal principles are diffusing themselves over the Union, surpasses our most sanguine anticipations. We have formerly given extracts from letters received from the eastern and middle states, indicative of the steady progress of mental improvement. The following communication will show that this is not confined to any particular section, but that a spirit of enquiry is now abroad, which must eventuate in the complete emancipation of the human mind from priestly bondage.

Laurenceburg, Indiana, March 2d, 1828.

I have duly received your paper, and have had great satisfaction in perusing it, and lending it to others. It is highly approved of by a goodly number here; and I have no doubt you will shortly receive considerable support from this quarter. There are many in this place who never allowed themselves to think on religious subjects, until very lately, but who are now breaking through the fog of superstition, and throwing off the shackles of Christianity. The Methodist minister here has had the liberality to give some of your papers a reading. It is a day of reasoning in our land; priestcraft has received a blow that will, in a short time, bury the whole fraternity in oblivion.

It is probable that in the course of three or four months, I shall be able to obtain a good subscription to the *Correspondent*, and shall feel happy in making the earliest communication to you on that subject. I inclose you \$ 5 at this time, and wish you to send me another paper, commencing with Vol. III.

REMARK.

It is incumbent on those who approve of our efforts to overthrow superstition, to exert themselves in endeavouring to make the *Correspondent* known, and to procure subscribers. We have reason to believe, that there are thousands in this country, who, if they knew of its existence, would gladly give it support, and who are only prevented from doing this by the base measures resorted to by fanaticism, to prevent even the *name* of our journal appearing in any of the public papers. Such, indeed, is the influence of the priesthood, that we have never been able to prevail on any individual to collect subscribers for us. Where this has been attempted, the person engaged has always been compelled to abandon the object in consequence of the abusive epithets with which he was loaded by the votaries of a "meek and holy religion."

From the (Ohio) "*American Friend*" of March 12th, 1828.

Mr. Prentiss—In 1824, a little prior to Robert Owen's first arrival in America, I went to Washington, distributed my printed memorial to each member of that Congress, for a grant of a million acres of land in East Florida in behalf of my "*Scientific Commonwealth*." When read in the Senate, it expired for want of breath. I then embarked for St. Domingo, intending to petition Boyer; but was wrecked by a gale, and lost 650 dollars. With the remainder of my damaged cargo, I visited South America, and found it a paradise for communities. But those superstitious people could not estimate how unity gives *knowledge*, knowledge *wealth*, wealth *power* and *felicity*.

The "*Scientific Commonwealth*," over which I preside, (and Sol, like the

head of any body, must guide the rest of the planets) has commenced at *Emblem Town*, 7 miles from Marietta, between Dock Creek and Muskingum river; and several families are now in full co-operation, one for all;—all for one!—My school begins this week. We receive scholars to board, &c. on moderate terms; mutual instruction our method, with its monitorial discipline.—But we inculcate no other religion than that of nature, and reverence to the Great Spirit of the Universe; by which we learn to love each other, and do all we can.

Do me the favor to publish this communication. Not that we seek members. Too many, alas! will seek us. The Community I was three months associated with at Valley Forge, near Philadelphia, was overwhelmed by a rush of importunate applicants, and there was not fortitude enough to refuse them. All that have failed have been surcharged in the commencement.

EDWARD P. PAGE.

MISCELLANEOUS.

St. Genevieve.—The Golden Legend relates that when she was a child St. Germaine said to her mother, "Know ye for certain that on the day of Genevieve's nativity the angels sung with joy and gladness." and looking on the ground he saw a penny signed with the cross, which came there by the will of God; he took it up, and gave it to Genevieve, requiring her to bear in mind that she was the spouse of Christ. She promised him accordingly and often went to the minister, that she might be worthy of her espousals, "Then," says the Legend, "the mother was angry, and smote her on the cheek—God avenged the child, so that the mother became blind." and so remained for one and twenty months, when Genevieve fetched her some holy water, signed her with the sign of the cross, washed her eyes, and she recovered her sight. It further relates, that by the Holy Ghost she showed many people their secret thoughts, and that from fifteen years to fifty she fasted every day except Sunday and Thursday, when she ate beans, and barley-bread of three weeks old. Desiring to build a church, and dedicate it to St. Denis and other martyrs, she required materials of the priests for that purpose. "Dame," answered the priests, "we would; but we can get no chalk nor lime." She desired them to go to the bridge of Paris, and bring what they found there. They did so till two swineherds came by, one of whom said to the other, "I went yesterday after one of my sows and found a-bed of lime." The other replied that he had also found one under the root of a tree that the wind had blown down. St. Genevieve's priests of course inquired where these discoveries were made, and bearing the tidings to Genevieve, the church of St. Denis was begun. During its progress the workmen wanted drink, whereupon Genevieve called for a vessel, prayed over it, signed it with the cross, and the vessel was immediately filled; "so," says the Legend, "the workmen drank their belly full," and the vessel continued to be supplied in the same way with "drink" for the workmen till the church was finished. At another time a woman stole St. Genevieve's shoes, but as soon as she got home lost her sight for the theft, and remained blind, till,

having restored the shoes, St. Genevieve restored the woman's sight. Desiring the liberation of certain prisoners condemned to death at Paris, she went hither and found the city gates were shut against her, but they opened without any other key than her own presence. She prayed over twelve men in that city possessed with devils, till the men were suspended in the air, and the devils were expelled. A child of four years old fell in to a pit and was killed; St. Genevieve only covered her with her mantle and prayed over her, and the child came to life and was baptized at Easter. On a voyage to Spain she arrived at a port "where, as of custom, ships were wont to perish." Her own vessel was likely to strike on a tree in the water, which seems to have caused the wrecks; she commanded the tree to be cut down, and began to pray; when lo, just as the tree began to fall, "two wild heads, gray and horrible, issued thereout, which stank so sore, that the people that were there were envenomed by the space of two hours, and never after perished ship there; thanks be to God and this holy saint."

At Meaux, a master not forgiving his servant his faults, though St. Genevieve prayed him, she prayed against him. He was immediately seized with a hot ague; "on the morrow he came to the holy virgin, running with open mouth like a boar, and requiring pardon." She then blessed him, the fever left him, and the servant was pardoned. A girl going by with a bottle, St. Genevieve called to her, and asked what she carried, she answered oil, which she had bought; but St. Genevieve seeing the devil sitting on the bottle, blew upon it, and the bottle broke, but the saint blessed the oil, and caused her to bear it home safely notwithstanding. The Golden Legend says, that the people who saw this, marvelled that the saint could see the devil, and were greatly edified.

*Arguments proving that the Christian Religion ruins all those States
where it is the Established Religion.*

Abridged from a work translated from the French, and first published in 1698.

Continued from page 159.

4. *Relics.*—Another of their baits to fish for the people's money, is the holy relics, as they call them, in their churches, monasteries, and convents: and, when the people's devotion grows cold for the old relics, they never fail of bringing new shrines, or boxes full of fresh ones; and ordinarily they say they come from holy Rome. It is well enough known, that oftentimes these relics are pieces of pasteboard fashioned like bones; sometimes they are the real bones of a human creature, and sometimes of beasts, as it hath been often proved: the priests and monks making it a matter of diversion to insult the foolish credulity of the people in this impudent manner, and yet, at the same time, make them pay for seeing and touching all those relics.

5. *Miracles.*—There are also miracles to be performed from time to time, when the priests and monks please, by the statues, images, or bones of some dead man or woman, under the name of relics or shrines of some saints, as they call the bones and boxes in which they keep them. These miracles are of great advantage to the clergy, for by this means they bring abundance of offerings to their churches and chapels.

6. *Legacies*.—There are moreover legacies, dirges, and donatives, whether they be voluntary by persons whom they have seduced or suborned, or altogether false, which the priests or monks forge, in order to despoil whole families; whereof the world has had millions of examples; some such happen every day.

7. *Auricular Confession*.—Auricular confession is one of their most gainful inventions, by which they shear their flock four times in a year. There are few people who do not at such times give them a piece of money, especially those who are guilty of great crimes; and thereupon they receive absolution, provided that, together with this, they do some little troublesome thing, which the priests impose upon them under the notion of penance, the better to colour that infamous traffic, and to make the people believe that it is not for the money they absolve them; for that would appear odious even to the most dissolute wretch. The Pope and his clergy make great use of this confession, to dive into the secrets of princes and grandees, and of people in general, so that they may make their own use of it, and take measures to pry into the greatest secrets of men and women, which gives the ecclesiastics an opportunity to debauch the female sex, or to squeeze money out of them.

8. *Burials*.—There is another thing very gainful to the Christian clergy, and that is burials; not only in that they sell the ground at a dear rate in their churches and convents, and that they make a great deal of profit by masses for the dead, but they get also a great deal of money for the singing of a multitude of the priestly herd at ordinary interments, where there is commonly a great number, who have each of them a piece of money and a good treat, at which they are sure to fuddle themselves. They sing in the streets, like so many priests of Bacchus, things which neither the people nor the greatest part of themselves understand, and which occasions a great charge to the friends of the deceased, who frequently have not a bit of bread left after they have paid for the funeral, and the masses that are to be said afterwards for the deceased. Sometime ago it was a complaint at Paris, that the meanest person, such as footman, could not be buried for less than four pistoles. There is a tax, also, as I am informed, of eight crowns laid on every burial for the king.

9. and 10. *Marriages and Baptisms*.—The gain which the priests have by marriages and baptisms is also very excessive.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—The regular monthly meeting of the "Free Press Association," will be held to-morrow (Sunday) the 6th inst. at 11 o'clock forenoon. Members are particularly requested to be punctual in their attendance.

The *scientific* lecture will be delivered at 10 o'clock A. M. and the *theological* lecture at 3 o'clock P. M. of the same day.

* * The first four numbers of the *Correspondent* being now reprinted complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 12.

NEW YORK, APRIL 12, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RELIGION AND NATURE.

Mr. Editor—I never read the Bible studiously, and have a strong dislike to it. It is my opinion, that if I did accustom myself to peruse such false literature as it is composed of, it would materially injure my style both of speaking and writing, and as I am a young man in my minority, or what the law terms infancy, I am determined to study none but the best models. I recollect being in the company of a juvenile party a few years ago, which consisted of respectable young persons of both sexes. The conversation turned upon the amusement and instruction to be gathered from the reading or recital of any narrative, or didactic piece of composition. When the conversation ceased, I was requested to read a chapter from the Bible as it was Sunday evening, which was instantly handed to me, with the full liberty of reading whatever part I might think proper. I, with more impudence than modesty, I allow, began to read the 38th chapter of Genesis; in the course of which I was frequently interrupted by the company, who observed that I was not keeping to the text, and that I was, to use a theatrical phrase, *gagging*. I, to clear myself from the imputation of reading the “blessed book” in a farcical manner, immediately referred to the indelicate passages to their complete astonishment, and concluded reading amidst the laugh and joke of the male, but amidst the modest and timid blushes of the female part of the company.

There is a deal of bad logic, or false reasoning in the Bible. I could point out likewise, many contradictory passages were it necessary. In one place it says something about the moon being turned into blood; about the earth being at some future time to be destroyed by fire. In another place it is said that the earth abideth for ever. What is this but absurdity? What is this, but the most gross and palpable contradiction?

Systems and books of faith and divine revelation are the stumbling blocks in the paths of social life. In the first stage of life's arduous journey, the better reason and natural judgment of man is broken or destroyed by them; the beautiful walks of Nature are forsaken and neglected; while the bogs and quagmires of religion are every day receiving into their destroying abyss, the wretched wanderers from the path of Nature.

Nature, the common mother of all beings, may be compared to a delightful nymph whose charms never fail to retain their attractive power. Religion may be compared to a deceitful courtesan, decorated with “shreds and patches,” which allure and deceive the eye when observed at a distance, but, on a closer view, the paint and frippery is discovered; they no longer hide her deformity; she then appears to be what she really is, an impure and diseased strumpet, from whose loathsome carcase we turn with disgust.

It is thee, O Nature! that we must court and admire; there is nothing about thee but what is pure as purity itself; thy lineaments are fine and beautiful; thy charms great and transcendent. While we live, we will adore thee, and death itself will but rivet us more closely to thee. O Nature! sweet and delightful nymph! thou shalt be our partner and guide in the journey of life. We faithfully promise, never to forsake thee, but accompany thee hand in hand in all our movements. In doing this, we shall secure to ourselves a thousand pleasures, a thousand exquisite enjoyments; we shall never want a stimulus for virtuous actions, and shall pass our days, the allotted period of our existence, in comfort and in solid happiness.

Those fanatic beings who are sunk in the wretchedness of an imaginary state of sin and sorrow; who look upon the world as a cave of misery; who are led astray by the *ignis fatuus* of religion, would have been contented and happy had they continued in their natural and proper sphere: but, unfortunately, like all those who forsake Nature, they must incessantly feel the keenest pangs of pain; they must become morose and gloomy; linger out their existence in the sharpest misery, and at last expire in sorrow and despair.

EPICURUS.

THE INDIAN'S LETTER.—NO. II.

It is at present a disputed point whether there ever was such a person in existence as Jesus Christ. It certainly makes little odds to us whether there was, or was not such a man. But I am of opinion, that there never was such a man in existence. If there had, we should have some corroborating evidence in favour of it. All the other impostors, who have from time to time duped the folly, or insulted the wisdom of mankind, have left tangible proofs of their personality, and may be traced in time, place, and circumstance, by the unsophisticated testimony of disinterested historians; personal knowledge identifies them, and creditable authority convinces us: but here nothing is substantial; every thing is hearsay, and impudent, unfounded assertion, accompanied with the brazen threat, that if you do not believe the absurd inconsistent story, you will be damned to all eternity. This last clause, this vile menace betrays at once the fraud and ignorance of the authors, and takes the thing out of Omnipotence, resigning it at once to the dogmatical priest, who seems, by the threatening adjunct, to be doubtful as to the reception of the doctrine, and so prepared it a credit by previously condemning its critic.

But as so great a part of the world believe in the wretched, trashy tale, it is proper to pay some respect to so large a society, and reason with them for our own sakes, if not theirs. Let us, as we have already for the sake of argument admitted their monstrous tale, now accept their mischievous, incomprehensible doctrine, for the same purpose. Ridicule, they say, is the criterion of truth. By this, I am to understand, that the serious, intrepid aspect of truth is proof against risibility. If so, Christianity will not stand this ordeal, for it and its ceremonies are the most laughable subjects with which I am acquainted. From the insipid ceremony of infant baptism to their humming a prayer over the senseless dead body, whose soul, (if it had one) according to their own tenets, they well know must be then wailing in burning brimstone, that plentiful article of Christian dispensation. But then, baptism and prayers for the dead are highly essential, if not to

the infant and the dead, at least, to the priest, for he gains a fee, and, of course, *consequence*, by both; therefore, they are both highly necessary. God has commanded, "to multiply and replenish the earth:" but the orders of the Divinity must not be complied with before the pimping priest has repeated his stale lesson and received his fee.

Do these things, or do they not, point out the very authors of the doctrine? Do we not see in every thing pertaining to this divine Christianity, the corrupt outline of a catch-penny religion, shaded with legible colours by the priest, and the whole picture a design of artful fraud and money-gaining inheritance? Can these things have any thing to do with human redemption, with divine revelation, and the salvation of man's immortal soul? Can a fat priest, skulking about in his canonicals, with his deacons pushing the black bag in your face to shame you out of your sixpences? Can these lazy drones lessen the guilt of human iniquity, or improve the scheme of man's happiness? Is the priest exempted from the duties taught by Christian morality, and permitted, by virtue of his black coat and long face, to sin with impunity?

The natural and ready answer to these queries is, that the priest, in all worldly matters, is no better than his ignorant flock, and the conclusion sinks him and his doctrine below them. Let us once more admit this doctrine to be true; to be for the benefit of man, and to be of divine origin. Then let us ask, what benefit has accrued to the world or to mankind from the divine institution? Here we can answer the question *ourselves* to the entire satisfaction of the curious, for history produces the solution, and the impartiality of truth at once decides the argument; and the conclusion we draw is, that the world has not improved in morals by the divine mission. On the contrary, religion has been a dead weight on human improvement; a constant drawback on the perfection of intellect; a hostile barrier raised against the freedom of thought; a pointed arrow aimed at freedom; a sword always drawn to wound human happiness! Religion has universally increased the weakness of the human mind; subjected the soul, or thought, to incomprehensible horrors and terrors; clothed the intellect with darkness; forbade the light of reason to emit a ray to irradiate the understanding; bound man with chains of bigotry to the footstool of superstition; and then spurned its victim as a wretch unworthy to live, yet afraid to die!

This bugbear, this pernicious bugbear, this horrid Christian doctrine, this puerile fabrication of merciless priests, is of more evil tendency than the worship of Moloch or Odin, or the human sacrifices of the Druids. Here they *preach* forbearance and mercy, while they *practise* intolerance and cruelty! Look into history; see there what scenes of horror and iniquity; what massacre, rape, robbery, and human carnage; what atrocities! Nations destroyed, millions annihilated, all, all for the love of God, the honour of his Son, and the benefit of his holy church!!! The foolish rabble might have imagined that they were right: but the dark, daring, designing priest, who set them on—O! of what was his heart made? It were enough to make one doubt the existence of God, or he would not suffer such impious wretches to live for a moment. If Christianity had been of God, it would have received, in spite of the Devil, the universal suffrage of man. And God would surely punish the impious wretches, who, in his sacred name.

have traduced his character, and made him the author and perpetrator of so many atrocities!

We may, therefore, rationally conclude, that God is no Christian; and, likewise, that the Christian God is not the friend of man, and only considers the welfare of the priest; that we are no wiser for the Christian dispensation; and that the priests will, by their perseverance in wickedness, overturn their own church, and man will yet improve by their villany.

Revealed religion! This is the greatest enigma that I know! How it came about, or where it sprung from, I can form no idea. Or who was the first inventor of the daring fabrication is to me an everlasting puzzle; nor does it seem probable, that any human knowledge will ever shed any light on the subject. Yet, history abounds with much curious information concerning it; the poets sing it; the priests preach it; and tradition is for ever brim full of it. Still, no light! All the old women and children have it by heart. Yet here am I in the dark still! My ignorance and stupidity are very great, I allow; but, surely, I ought to be as sensible of cause and effect as an old woman, or child of five or six years of age. I am not, it seems; for they know, and I do not.

Leave this aside, awhile, it does not appear to me, that this article, called *revealed religion*, came cleanly manufactured into being, at once: the raw materials have undergone the hammer and anvil, the bellows-fire and crucible, and from such things as courage, benevolence, and wisdom, fear, gratitude, and esteem, pity, condolence, and protection, love, confidence, and admiration; from these well amalgamated, rectified, and spiritualized, sprung up the grand corrosive sublimate, revealed religion! What a pity, that out of such a compound of ingredients, the residue should be such a pernicious *caput mortuum*! The plain English of this is, that goodness in one begot gratitude in another, and unthinking virtue betrayed itself to slavery, to recompense unassuming generosity and manhood. These made heroes; heroes became demi-gods; demi-gods became omnipotents; and the priests, who fabricated their altars and temples, thought proper at last, to reveal the will of their Almightynesses to man, as the highest favour the immortals could bestow on frail mortality. Hence Dodonean oaks, Delphian and Ephesian oracles; hence the Sanscrit Zend-Avesta, Sadder, Bible, Testament, and Al Koran; hence the thousand prophets, teachers, and impostors; hence Brama, Moses, Zoroaster, Jesus Christ, and Mahomed; hence Cnipperdoling, Swedenborg, Brothers, and Johanna Southcote; and hence our holy and blessed revealed religion! Admit all true that is said about it, we ask, where is the benefit to man? What good has it done in the world? Shew us its virtue? Such bubbling and juggling; such twisting and turning; such finding and proving; such hearing and believing, without seeing or understanding, without proof or comprehension! Are the men all mad? Most certainly they are! Then it is useless to reason with them: but let us convince ourselves, and let the infatuated pursue their dark path to the brimstone lake and bottomless pit of reeking ignorance; let them wallow in mental depravity, and let the designing priest render every moment of their wretched lives unhappy and miserable; what is it to us? Not a great deal, you will say. Well, the Christian believer in revealed religion is generous still—you may be a Turk, a Jew, or an Atheist, or go headlong to hell, for any thing he cares; only you must keep your

religious opinions secret, and you must not attempt to detect the frauds, crimes, errors, and impositions of the priests of the Holy Scriptures by which they get their bread, or of their divine revealed religion.

MYSTERIES, PROPHECIES, &c.

Mr. Editor—I am now pretty well advanced in years, and during the greater part of my life time, I have been endeavouring, although hitherto without success, to ascertain why the “word of God,” as the scriptures of the Old and New Testament are called, should be harder to understand than the word of man? Why should that be mysterious which is most necessary to be plain? Why should not God’s word be understood in its natural sense? How is revelation *unrevealed* consistent with divine wisdom or goodness, or the marks of evidence of either? Does God delight to puzzle and distract human minds; and purposely, as by a wile, to deceive men’s understandings? Is this consistent with the character of goodness and truth? To what purpose are unknowable riddles, or inexplicable predictions? What knowledge does this convey? Or what warning do they give us of things to come if the meaning of the expression is not known? And what occasion is there for such prophecies? If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle? So except words are uttered easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? If no prophecy of scripture is of any private interpretation, it can have no mystical meaning. They that say one thing and mean another, are not to be depended on, nor regarded. Is it any mark of wisdom in a teacher to utter himself in words which the scholar with all his endeavours cannot understand: And if he by labour or chance hopes he has got the right sense, yet can never be sure of it? That which is good and wise need not be ashamed nor afraid to appear. The wisdom that is hidden, has not the face of wisdom. Her residence is founded on knowledge; but mystery or secrecy prevents our coming at it. How is it consistent with the wisdom of God to deliver mysteries to the world for men to explain as they can or will, leaving them in the dark to be eternally tossed about by their own giddy conceits, and his word to be to them an endless fund of deception, a maze of confusion, and an everlasting bone of contention? Where is the difference between what is unintelligible and nonsense? When mysteries prevail, credulity is infatuation. Any writing may be deemed prophetic, if a *mystical* interpretation be allowed. Whatever the spirit teaches, the letter says, that the time will come when men will turn their ears from truth, and be turned into fools. To put a spiritual or mystical interpretation on a prophecy, is to make a fable of it. Are not assertions and prevarications ever present where truth is present?—It seems as strange that the Jews should not know the meaning of their own Prophets, and we should, as that a foreigner, in tongue and religion, should understand the articles of our church, and our churchmen not understand them at all; and yet the stranger’s sense of these articles should be forced, foreign and allegorical.

I as a carnal man am apt to think the knack of understanding the prophecies and scriptures spiritually, is that of passing what sense men please upon them, to preserve their reputation: So if they can be fulfilled or understood in any sense, the prophets and writers keep their characters at the

expense of God's, who by this means is represented as prevaricating with mankind by saying one thing and meaning a different; or giving out ~~his~~ oracles in such dark enigmas, that neither speakers nor hearers know what is meant, nor have any certain rule to direct them. To all rational minds it is apparent, that they who go beyond natural things, go beyond their senses. Their spiritual sense, which is above the capacity of man, is the all confounding sense of nature. The reasonable relish of things spoils an enthusiastic appetite.

If we consider the nature of such prophecy as requires a spiritual or mystical interpretation, we shall find that were the prophets honest men, they did not understand what they themselves meant; for they that are honest will not speak so as to mislead and deceive their hearers. If they were not honest, they spoke one thing and meant another, by which they that believe in them were deceived; that is, for their faith and sincerity. So the Jews were deceived by their own prophets? They thought that believing them was faith in God; this faith deceived them, and they are cast off for being deceived! Unhappy people to be so made by their faith, by which they hoped to be saved. We plainly read, that the Prophets promised these people to send them a prince, who should deliver them out of the power of all their enemies, and make them everlastingly happy; no prophecy is more plain. The Jews believed that these Prophets were directed by God thus to speak; and they are deceived by thus believing in God: They could understand these prophecies no otherwise than according to the obvious and natural sense of the words delivered. If they had put a different sense upon them, it would have been easily proved they had been to blame; but because they understood and believed as they thought in God by his Prophets, in the most apparent sense, he, as we may say, has forsaken them! This is a miserable reflection! If they are wrong in so believing, their Prophets were wrong in so deceiving them. If we ascribe it to God, it is fathering the deception and the design on him. Words that cannot be understood are spoken to no purpose; they contain no revelation or prophecy; Or if there is any design or purpose by such utterance, it is a very deceitful one.

If the Jews were deceived by their Prophets, as they evidently were, by what means can Christians be sure of the certain times when the prophecies were written, and that they possess their uncorrupted writings? For it is well known that corruptions have crept into the text, and that it was the work of Ezra and others, after the Jews captivity, to find out and correct them as well as they could. If the word of God has been corrupted, there can be little dependance on the word of man, or on his wisdom or honesty to make it pure; for there are certain degrees of prejudice, partiality, interest, and ignorance, that man cannot surmount. The facts predicted should have been known to be fulfilled by those that knew the Prophets and their prophecies; unless there can be demonstrative proof that the traditional Prophecy could not possibly be corrupted. Oral tradition cannot be trusted to in the second or third generation; scarce from a second or third person. The natural infirmities of men generally corrupt it without intention. It is rare that two or three persons tell so much as the sense of the particulars of a story exactly one after another.

A Prophecy when delivered, should be such as no human reason could foresee, nor could possibly be any random guess. Then the original or true

copy of it should be well witnessed, and preserved by men that had no interest in deceiving the world. In this way there could be no possibility of corrupting or altering it. It should also be so clear and intelligible as to admit of no misunderstanding it. The circumstances that come after to pass should so agree with the plain Prophecy, that it may be as well known to be the fulfilling thereof as a man may know his own face in a glass : otherwise deception may creep in ; the very possibility of which should be absolutely guarded against. The better the chain holds together, the stronger it is. Extraordinary cases must have extraordinary proofs ; and after all, when the thing predicted is past, the credit of its prediction naturally lessens as time increases ; because it is well known that the world is full of impositions : And in the things of God, there ought not to be the least shadow of it.

Though it is endeavoured to be proved that some of the prophecies were *literally* fulfilled ; yet if all were not ; if some prove false, it is a proof the prophets were not under the influence of an infallible Spirit, or not infallibly guided by it ; and be the case either way, we cannot trust to them in all cases ; and if not in all, we cannot in any unless we can distinguish those cases. If the prophecies contain some good and true things, can those recommend them that are not so ?

The primitive Christians expected their Saviour to be a temporal king, both before and after the crucifixion of Jesus ; for the Millenarian Doctrine of his coming again to reign on the earth, is spoken of in several places of the New Testament which was to have been immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem ; and though the day and hour was not fixed, it was to be before *that generation passed away*. The Disciples were bid to expect for it, watch for it, and be ready, not for the Holy Ghost, his substitute ; but for Jesus himself, and the manner of his coming was described ; therefore those were called the last days and times. And though we are told the Gospel was first to be preached to all nations, we are also told that so it had then been in the Apostles' time. Christ's temporal reign on earth was also the opinion of the first Fathers of the church, viz. Cerinthus, in the first century. Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, had it from the christians by oral tradition. It was also embraced by Justin, Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolitus, Lactantius, Theophilus of Antioch, Methodus, Victorinus ; and the most illustrious of the ancient Fathers, were Advocates for the Millennium. It was impossible to persuade the *first* Christians to the contrary. They expected Christ, according to the Prophets, to sit on the throne or kingdom of David, which was a temporal kingdom, and from Jerusalem he was to administer judgment to all nations. The wise men that came to seek Jesus understood it so ; so did the angel Gabriel. Yet we are now told they were all mistaken, and that his kingdom was spiritual ; for though it was expected to be worldly, we are now sure his kingdom is not of this world, unless the established christian churches are a part of the world, having worldly power and grandeur, where his deputies generally rule as if they never expected king Jesus would come and call them to account.

Believers of Prophecies being puzzled to explain them, when the letter of the Prophecy was not parallel to the letter of the story they applied it to, have understood what was wanting to be made out, in an allegorical, figura-

tive or mystical manner; so they have made a mysterious application to the letter of the prophecy, or some one mystical prophecy to many very different cases: or the mystery of one, to the mystery of the other. By the spiritual wire-drawing of one or all these methods, they always may make out what they please. If by any of these means the expositor by chance or hard labour draws a tolerable good parallel, the prophet gets sure praise; but if he fails, which is oftener the case, the expositor gets sure disgrace. So difficult has the exposition generally been, not only to common capacities but to learned men, that happy is he who has gone into the battle and come off without a scar in his intellects, or being crippled in his understanding.

OBSERVATOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1828.

Opening Address, spoken before the Society of Free Enquirers, at Military Hall, New York, on Sunday, Feb. 24th, 1828. By Henry A. Fay.

Continued from page 172.

Let us ask, what is freedom? Is it, to have no restraint upon natural desires; to follow heedlessly and fearlessly every whim and capricious suggestion; with no motive but impulse, no master but inclination; no law limiting gratification but the insurmountable barriers of Nature? The human being, who lets loose thought and energy, to rove wherever the faculties can conduct, either in fact or fancy, will soon discover the poisons which lurk in mineral, vegetable, animal, and moral life; will read Nature's laws, written upon every herb of the field, every cloud in the azure expanse, which seems to arch the atmosphere, and feel the penalties in every erring action of the senses. The language is understood by every one who chooses to look at its characters; its doctrines are—sublime, immutable truth.

I do not wish to be understood as proposing that the reins of law which now bridle the fierce licentiousness of human passions, should be thrown upon the neck; but I mean, that the infant should be taught to investigate every subject; be told of every argument which has been advanced on every side of every question; and then it might be hoped that a judicial tribunal would be erected in every mind. There are those who think the history of past ages is a true description of the natural fate of man; that he is condemned for ever to be the slave of a succession of superstitions; that the majority are to continue to be the tools of crafty knaves, to work their vile purposes with.

It must be confessed, that, as far back through the long vista of ages, which the historian's pen has depicted to our view, as we can distinguish objects amid the gloom of fable, there appears a regular order of the birth, matured growth, and decay of national glory. To the cannibal, succeeds the ferocious lord of a moated tower, with his minstrel, his warder, his devoted tenantry. Then comes a messenger from invisible spirits, with tales of terror; heretics are burned, and faith in incomprehensible mysteries is the test of virtue. Reformers are fired with enthusiasm, and throw the burning brand of innovation into the fabric of theological speculation.

Philosophers bring reason to the contest, are admired, forgotten. Every generation is divided, into the applauders of antique wisdom, and the ridiculers of what is called "the rubbish of ignorant antiquity." Darkness is always about to be enlightened by the sun of intellectual day, and "never was a time like the present," is the dull, stale, canting tune of every would be discoverer of a new moral continent. The chimes which have been rung on the bells of every newly erected edifice in the architecture of empiricism, by every quack, are but repetitions, but echoes.

The "Society of Free Enquirers" are not the ignorant pretenders to the possession of divine oracles; nor do they claim to be considered teachers of truth. They are urged onward by the irresistible incentive, a desire for knowledge. A number of gentlemen have united their exertions, in the laudable and single endeavour to encourage each other, and every human being, to think *fearlessly* upon all topics essentially important to every one's welfare; to communicate from a rostrum, in the language of sincerity, whatever ideas any person may entertain, as being considered useful to the human race. Almost every editor is patronized by a party, to which his paper must be subservient; almost every society is devoted to partial views, concerning a particular class of people; almost every speaker in our state legislative and congressional assemblies has constituents of a trade or profession to serve, to whose words his voice is the mere temporary interpreter; but there are interests in common to all our species.

This institution is intended to be an arena, where truths of *universal* concern shall be the prizes of victory. Hither is invited the inhabitant of every clime; while on this floor, every individual is in the single character of an equal inheritor of a respective and equal share of those enjoyments, which Nature has distributed throughout the universe, and subjected to the powers of our race. When a man enters our hall, which we are now consecrating to the sacred cause of honest principle, his coat is not to be looked to, as if a fashionable cut alone entitled him to civility. Let him wear the livery of folly, or be his garments the habiliments of suffering poverty, if he is willing to unite with us in sincere and fearless examination of the present state of society, and in giving every one a patient hearing, *he is welcome*. If after every argument is adduced, every view taken of the subject, a decision can be arrived at, let that be the guide of our conduct.

However, it is almost settled now, by the practice and precepts of nearly all persons, that truth and honesty are but mere phantoms which wise ones talk of to fools, in order to gain confidence; that every thought and action should be according to policy, in the studied system of prostrating the power of every fellow-being within the sphere of its influence. Such a principle of behaviour is the offspring of a contemptible, short-sighted, weak intellect, which misleads its unfortunate owner to suppose that it can rise one degree higher in the scale of happiness, when a neighbour sinks one degree lower in it; whereas the contrary is the fact. Whoever lights up one momentary smile of satisfaction upon another's cheek, adds to the sum of human felicity, and a genial ray of kindred sympathy is reflected upon the benefactor's heart.

Alas! How many there are, who bear about them an atmosphere of gloom, within the darkness of which the buds of hope and cheerfulness lose their bloom and fragrance; and the selfish magicians, in the night

which they have conjured up around themselves, soon lament that the garden of their own solitary joys is become a blasted heath. The philanthropist, who studies to make all happy, lives under blue skies, and in a perfumed grove; looks of love are every where as he moves; he revels in pastures of pleasures which his own genial kindness of disposition has warmed into luxuriance; he is an apt emblem of the sun—the centre of a world of light and life.

The effeminate and luxurious habits of our citizens have created in almost every breast an apprehension of poverty. This fear goads on every one, who entertains it, to chain down eagle natured thought to the calculation of pounds, shillings, and pence. It has become a shameful thing to make a bargain, and the unhappy loser of a few particles of a base, yellow metal, scarcely dare show his face, and sets every intellectual faculty at work to regain his lost honour. A person who prefers freedom from the cares of a fortune, to the vexations of opulence, is considered as having lost his wits. The state of a citizen's power or purse is known by the more and less active attentions of friendship. If fame whispers, that (to use a vulgar phrase) "he is doing well," that whisper is a summer breeze, which warms to a higher degree the mercury of kindness, in the thermometer of that man's fate. If he has office or money to bestow, his praises are on every tongue; he is *very respectable*.

But look at the child of nature, who loves to rove free, in simplicity and tranquillity. One neglected knot in his cravat, one aberration from the dull, insipid quackery of fashionable follies, frightens off swarms of vermin parasites. If he ceases to exchange with his fellows all those silly speeches, and forms, used as the circulating medium coined by custom in the mint of mental imbecility, let him be ever so rational, under such circumstances he sinks in the estimation of those fools who dare not to give a sound to the convictions of their own reason, from the rank he held, and becomes, even if a philosopher—a vagabond. The *respectable* deserters of noble sincerity and unsophisticated honesty, despise and outlaw the daring wanderer from the common track; dreading the ridicule of ignorance, prejudice, and fashion, they leave the honest man to pine in solitary forests, and to mourn that he has awakened from visions of love, long cherished affection, and kindred sympathies of friendly solicitude. And yet these cruel, cold hearted calculators, who can wantonly immolate upon the altar of their own frivolous devotions the keenest sensibilities of another's breast, call themselves respectable, good, and wise.

Whoever has read the melancholy particulars of the talented, noble, unfortunate, neglected Conway's fate, can learn the sufferings of many an humble but feeling bosom, whose life may close in a more common manner, and with less exciting eclat.

Is there, on any favored spot, in the apparently infinite space, around this little ball of rock, earth, and water, upon the surface of which we creep; this comparatively small particle of matter, which whirls as swiftly, as unregardedly by the inhabitants of inconceivable distant planets, as unimportant in the myriads of globes which are scattered beyond the observance of our optics, as an atom of floating dust, millions of which glitter in a single sunbeam's point: is there, I ask, any where, an intelligent ruler of worlds and systems, by whose will the life, the hopes and fears of animal existence

are regulated? Are we struggling to counteract such a stupendous and omnipotent fiat?

Incomprehensible principle! art thou invisible, yet acknowledged element, which, yet undetected, constitutes the base of every substance, a point—infinity? Are electricity, gravitation, vitality, intellect, god, but various names for the same power?

If such a providence governs, and O! man,

“ All Nature is but art unknown to thee;
All chance, direction which thou can’st not see;
All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good.”

Why then does the ignorant, blind sage, satirize those deeds which are destinies; point out to his fellow-creatures a different course of behavior from that which, in every most trivial action, is unalterably interwoven with the eternal frame of the universe? The same influence which holds circumstance as it is, impels the restless energies of man to strive against it.

We cannot throw a prophetic glance upon the distant shore of futurity. But the time may arrive, when all men will acknowledge similar doctrines in politics, morality, philosophy, and religion. It may be discovered and believed that all persons have been laboring under some prejudices and errors, and that in the exercise of sincerity, forbearance, temperance, honesty, freedom of opinion and open expression of it, every human being, may find a reward in personal enjoyment. Education is now enlightening almost every class of people. When every infant shall be instructed in natural Philosophy, in chemistry, and taught how to investigate and encouraged to investigate, it may be that the unshackled powers of the human intellect may invade even the regions of mystery; that despotism, superstition, folly, may cease to lead talent and honesty in their train; that the conflicting interests of kings and subjects, masters and slaves, may be amalgamated into one, the true interest of each and all; that crowns and sceptres, mitres and croziers, crescents and crosses, and even parsons’ surplices, black gowns, and white bands, will only be remembered in an old woman’s story, as the once devoutly worshipped idols of a nose led generation.

If among the numerous religions that have for ages distracted, and now distract, all minds, there be one that is the truth, perhaps that may become so clear, so mathematically demonstrated by natural cause and effect, as to compel universal homage and belief.

The materialist certainly has much reason on his side; and if we doubt an instant any point of faith which has been impressed upon our minds from infancy, how is that doubt to be solved but by reference to objects within the grasp of the senses? I have even heard a materialist say, that he was *pleased*, though he felt convinced of there being no immaterial existence within him, which became his body’s guest after he had involuntarily assumed the identity of humanity, and which would continue in the consciousness of what he loved and hated during his brief possession of the human shape, through endless ages. He said he believed that death was but a change, not more to be dreaded than the alteration which occurs every instant, in the component parts of every substance; and that dying was like going to sleep, during which a rapid decomposition took place, and the constituents of the man were absorbed into other shapes and beings full

of life, and perhaps in pure enjoyment of a fresh youthfulness. In his mind he said he partook of a promising immortality, wherein the cares of one life, the burdened memory of one consciousness, were plunged into the "Lethe" stream of forgetfulness, and hope and renovated vigor animated a succession of identities during the eternal revolutions of Nature. If materialism is truth, and *that* truth should pervade this world, then the clouds of mystery would be dispersed, and man's conduct would be regulated in strict accordance with the various capacities and tendencies of animal sensation. Every step in the path of improvement would be the gradual progress of intelligence, exerted to exalt human existence in the scale of happiness.

All this speculation, I confess, is merely conjecture; and it may be that the pugnacious inclinations, which have hitherto drained oceans of blood from the veins of our race, will to the remotest posterity involve it in disputes about the qualities of matter, and the literary arrangement in philosophy of the stars, suns, and systems.

We must confine ourselves to the things which will make us pass our hours agreeably; to the causes of health and sickness, of joy and grief.

When we see some of our fashionable loungers in perfumery shops, who tremble at every cloud in the sky, to whom every breeze is a blast, and who dare scarcely move but with a thousand ceremonies, can we expect *them* to think freely? Nature is to them a dungeon; their tranquillity is at the mercy of every wind, and even of every whisper of every fool; and danger presents its frown in every sentinel smile which ignorant ridicule generates.

Look at man where effeminacy has not established its reign. An author, describing the inhabitants of Norway, says, "the Norwegians are inured to cold and hardships from their childhood; for in the latter end of November they run about, barefooted, even upon the ice. The mountaineers who daily go into the woods, have frequently their beards full of icicles, and their naked bosoms full of snow. The author says that in his travels over the highest mountains of Norway, which are covered with snow, and where horses are of no service, he has seen the peasants in great numbers do the work of those animals, whom they seem almost to equal in strength. When they have been in a profuse sweat, he saw them throw themselves every half hour upon the snow for the sake of its refreshing coolness, and even suck it to quench their thirst. This they undergo without the least apprehension of a cold, or a fever, and without murmuring or betraying the least discontent. On the contrary, they go on, singing merrily, and, with incredible cheerfulness and alacrity, undergo the hardest labor imaginable for nine hours together."

What a contrast between the Norwegian mountaineer and the New York dandy! Is it surprising that the latter—the exquisite—fears to disobey the orders of his man milliner with regard to the disposition of a ribbon or a ruffle, and that, if a lock of his curled scratch should get displaced, the frown of his barber would almost make him perish in despair? He is a fit tool for tyrants, who scowl either from a throne or a pulpit. He scarcely dare permit a secret thought to wander beyond the tastefully tied bow of his neck kerchief—his highest ambition is to be a silly coquette's indispensable.

People are generally superstitious in proportion as they are credulous and weak minded. The scale is graduated from a philosopher down—down—

to a fop. Faith in the sanctity of professing ministers of the Almighty is now almost entirely confined to the female sex—most old women are exceedingly strong in their belief in it—and you may ascertain the creed of a coxcomb by asking the opinion of the pretty faced girl, to whom he has the high honor of being a convenience.

But let us return to that class of mortals whose ideas venture beyond the tailor's shop, who do not contentedly submit to any government but that of morality.

In every age, in every country, the obstacles in ambition's frenzied career, the terror of aspiring demagogues, and the revolutionizers of empires, have been free enquirers. It seems as if, in the sicklied frame of corrupted society, there always lurks that latent constitutional vigor—free enquiry.

Every superstitionist may be deemed an Adam, to damn the human race to sin, misery, and moral death; every free enquirer—a savior, a redeemer.

A superstitionist is the lazy worm, which crawls grovelling in the mud and mire of mystery. A free enquirer launches forth his noble curiosity into the sea of space—roams from star to star, almost losing for a time the puny fears and anxieties of humanity.

The person who never quits the noisy streets of a city, beholds around him high houses; every way magnificence meets his eye, and he almost adores the treasures which seem unlimited. If that city is looked upon at a distance, its immense size is diminished in his sight to a speck. Then the scene forces into his voice an ejaculation, into his eye a lurking smile, at the busy self-importance of some purse-proud citizen of that speck; at the puffing pretensions of a few congregated particles of what has been successively in the brute class, the vegetable, the dirt, now in the ceaseless and innumerable convolutions of matter, among the variously fantastical shapes it assumes, fortuitously falling into its occasional figure of that helpless creature—man.

It is thus the free enquirer often looks at a splendid metropolis. He sometimes examines the machinery of this playhouse of life in the page of history, where, in the recorded lapse of centuries, the rise and fall of empires, the crimes, follies, and wise doings of men appear but as the tale of a poet; and the memory of past events serves to while away an idle hour.

A free enquirer is often receiving a revelation, when he seems momentarily to enjoy the prospect which a great painter of truth has depicted in glowing colors, as the view of a supreme intelligence:

“Who sees with equal eye, as god of all,
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall:
Atoms or systems into ruin hurld,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.”

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Jews.—O those from the Sabbath before Palm-Sunday, to the last hour of the Tuesday after Easter, the Christians in England were accustomed to stone and beat the Jews who desired to exempt themselves from the infliction of this cruelty, commuted for a payment in money. It was likewise ordained in one of the Christian services, during Lent, that all or-

ders of men should be prayed for except the Jews. These usages were instituted and justified by a dreadful perversion of scripture, when rite and ceremony triumphed over truth and mercy. Humanity was dead, for superstition Molochized the heart. From the dispersion of the Jews they have lived peaceably in all nations towards all, and in all nations been persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, and put to death, or massacred by mobs. In England, kings conspired with their subjects to oppress them. To say nothing of the well known persecution they endured under king John, the walls of London were repaired with the stones of their dwellings, which his barons had pillaged and destroyed. Until the reign of Henry II., a spot of ground near Red-cross street, in London, was the only place in all England wherein they were allowed to bury their dead. In 1262, after the citizens of London broke into their houses, plundered their property, and murdered seven hundred of them in cold blood, King Henry III. gave their ruined synagogue in Lothbury to the friars called the fathers of the sackcloth. The church of St. Olave in the Old Jewry was another of their synagogues till they were dispossessed of it. Were the sufferings they endured to be recounted we should shudder. Our old English ancestors would have laughed any one to derision who urged in a Jew's behalf, that he had "eyes," or "hands," "organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions;" or that he was "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian."

Abbe.—The word *abbe*, let it be remembered, signifies father. If you become one, you render a service to the state; you doubtless perform the best work that a man can perform; you give birth to a thinking being: in this action there is something divine. But if you are only *Monsieur l'abbe*, because you have had your head shaved, wear a small collar, and a short cloak, and are waiting for a fat benefice, you do not deserve the name of *Abbe*.

The ancient monks gave this name to the superior whom they elected; the *abbe* was their spiritual father. What different things do the same words signify at different times! The spiritual *abbe* was once a poor man at the head of others equally poor: but the poor spiritual fathers have since had incomes of two hundred or four hundred livres, and there are poor spiritual fathers in Germany who have a regiment of guards.

A poor man, making a vow of poverty, and in consequence becoming a sovereign! Truly, this is intolerable. The laws exclaim against such an abuse; Religion is indignant at it; and the really poor, who want food and clothing, appeal to heaven against *Monsieur l'abbe*.

Arguments proving that the Christian Religion ruins all those States where it is the Established Religion.

Abridged from a work translated from the French, and first published in 1698.

Continued from page 176.

11. *Boarders.*—They gain likewise by their schools and boarders, but it may be said in some sense, that what they gain that way is honestly got:

yet hereby they do likewise take the bread out of the mouths of abundance of school-masters, who are honester men than themselves, have nothing else to live on, have families to maintain, and who pay taxes to the king proportionably to their income. But they are accustomed to inspire their scholars with pernicious sentiments, also a false and bastard devotion, which inclines them to shake off all subjection to their parents, to make themselves Jesuits, or priests of the oratory; and to give their estates to the order into which they enter themselves; or, at least, to make their relations pay them a good pension, of which the convent reaps the profit. They do likewise corrupt those children in another manner; at least, the Jesuits labour under the scandal of it; and, indeed, there is no wickedness of which they are not capable. The other monks, who neither keep schools nor boarders, do nevertheless seduce abundance of young people, under pretence of confessing them, and, by virtue of the credit which they have, to creep into houses: they insnare and seduce also the parents to become monks and nuns, and to give them their estates, especially in the time of widowhood: nay, sometimes they persuade them to be unmarried on that account; and so create divisions betwixt man and wife, and their children. They do likewise debauch their wives and daughters, know all the secrets of old and young, and make their own advantage of the weakness of every one. In many places the nuns do likewise take young boarders, who oftentimes learn something else than virtue among them; and, by degrees, they persuade them also to turn nuns, especially if there be any profit to be had by it to the covenant: for the relations of the girls give them either a considerable sum of money for ever, or a good annual pension; which is so much loss to the capital stock of the kingdom. There are also many of these convents, both of monks and nuns, who, for money, take in the young bastards of persons of quality, that would not have the thing known; and many times they make way with them; there have been found, in ponds, cisterns, and houses of office, several corpses and bones of these poor infants.

12. *Tapers and Torches.*—They plunder the people also by their tapers, wax-candles, and torches, which they use in grand processions; for they oblige the people to furnish these things, and all that is not spent belongs, as they allege, to the church; that is to say, to the priests of monks. It is well enough known, that on certain days, which they look upon as great festivals, they oblige every corporation or company, in great towns, to furnish huge torches, each of whom sometimes represents an history of the Old and New Testament, or fabulous legend; or sometimes they will have the images of five or six persons, or as many beasts, in wax, so weighty that they must have ten or twelve men to carry one of these torches. They carry twenty such in procession, which cost sometimes more than ten or twenty thousand livres (*L. 833 6s. 8d.*) This is chiefly to be seen on that day which the call the Feast of God; for the Popes (good men!) have thought fit that God should have a festival, as well as Dominic Loyola, Xavier, &c.

13. *Burning Convents.*—There is yet another secret way, that the monks are charged with using, to levy a great sum of money upon the people and their own devotionists, all at once. When their convent and their dependencies, or their church, is old and does not please them, they themselves

set it on fire, and then make heavy lamentations for the sad accident which it hath pleased God to permit; and then they go abegging for money to rebuild what is burnt. If it require thirty thousand livres, more or less, to rebuild it as it was, they will raise at least one hundred thousand upon the people, leaving always the work unfinished, and give out that the sums raised were but very small, and not enough to carry on the work; for none but themselves know exactly what is given, or what the building hath cost, because they take care that nobody shall be acquainted with their affairs; and so this furnishes them with a pretence to beg constantly, and to procure legacies from silly people when dying, on pretence of finishing the work.

14. *Minor Relics*.—There are many orders who sell little relics, which they say have been consecrated by the Pope, and beads that touched some miraculous images. The Carmelites have what they call the apparel of the Virgin, &c.

15. *Holy Days*.—The holy days are, moreover, very gainful to the ecclesiastics of all sorts, because the people go to church on those days with more devotion than on Sundays: cause abundance of masses to be said, and, besides paying for them, give money also to the box. Those festival days are like so many fairs, wherein the clergy make money of their merchandise. They are likewise very advantageous to the Pope, not only in that they contribute to the enriching of his ecclesiastical troops at the expense of those powers whom he has brought under his yoke, but that they weaken the princes by keeping in their kingdoms armies and garrisons of priests and monks, who have sworn to him, as being, in their opinion, superior to the king. Thus they are constantly ready either to revolt or to kill kings, when the Pope desires it, or when princes would have them contribute to the charge of the state. But those festivals we now treat of are, above all, advantageous to the Popes in this, that they raise them above all human authority, by which they give laws to the consciences of men, and oblige them to adore and invoke whom they please, and, for the most part, villains; that is to say, the Popes themselves, and the ministers of their tyranny. Thence also they reap another grand advantage, viz. the money which they squeeze from the people for canonizing such and such saints.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered in the Hall of the "Free Press Association," on Sunday (to-morrow) the 13th inst. at 11 o'clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued at 3 o'clock.

Books for sale at the office of the *Correspondent*:

Volney's Ruins; or, Meditations on the Revolutions of Empires.—Octavo copy, calf bd. and gilt, \$1.50; duodecimo, \$1; do. in bds. 75 cents.

* * * The first four numbers of the *Correspondent* being now reprinted complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 13.

NEW YORK, APRIL 19, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE SOUL.

Mr. Editor—Although it is long since I rejected all notions of revealed religion, I do think there is a controlling power in nature; and all the philosophical writing I have read, have not changed that opinion. But what that power is, it is my firm belief we shall never know. It is evident to me that something must have existed from all eternity, or nothing could exist; and a power that could destroy one particle of matter could destroy the whole.

It is asked "how did matter come into life?" Now this also, I believe, we shall never know. But to prove that a man has a soul distinct from matter, and peculiar to the animal man, it is said "that man is always in a state of improvement." To this I would answer:—man has the power of speech, and man has hands and fingers. With this exception, man is the same as any other animal; but, by the help of his fingers, he is enabled to form characters to represent his ideas, and, by the help of speech, he can teach them to his fellow-men. This no other animal can do. The knowledge of each generation of brutes dies with them; but the knowledge of each generation of men remains recorded for the next to improve on.

The generation that invented the steam engine could not have invented it, if the generations that preceded it had not discovered the art of working the iron, and if knowledge had not been handed down to them by the means aforesaid. I agree that it is pleasing to mark the progress of improvement in the human mind; but let us endeavour to trace it to its true cause, and not arrogate to ourselves a superiority over all other parts of nature, or assume that man alone is to have an everlasting life, and that every other part of animated nature is to return to dust. Knowledge may be said to be in geometrical or even in arithmetical progression. The knowledge of one generation may be doubled in the next. The discovery of the art of printing has no doubt been the cause of knowledge making a greater progress in the last two centuries than it had in a far greater length of time before. This is owing to the greater facility of communicating ideas, which this art affords to man. How many, many ages had passed away, before that art was discovered, and had it been lost with the generation that discovered it, many might have elapsed before it had again been discovered. This art shows the great utility of the use of speech and of the hands, for, at the first how rude in performance was it, compared to the perfection of the present day! Had not the discoverer the power to record it, it must have been lost with that generation the same as any thing you can teach any other animal, must die with it.

It is evident that every animal has the same senses as man; at least those of the order of Mammalia, which we call the higher order; nay some

of these have some of the senses in higher perfection than man. This no one will deny. Now all our knowledge comes by the senses ; this cannot be denied, for a man born deaf has no ideas of sound, and a man born blind knows nothing of colours. The mind, the soul, or sentient principle, or by whatever name you call it, is built upon the senses ; all our knowledge comes by the senses, but we have the advantage of recording that knowledge for the benefit of generations to come. This is what no other animal can do. But some will say man is a reasonable creature ? man can reason. Yes, but man must first *learn* to reason. What can we reason but from what we know ; we understand by such history as we have, that man had been upon the earth more than three thousand years before the immortality of the soul was taught. The Jews knew nothing of it till they learned it of the Greeks. This is evident, for the author of the books of Moses makes the Jewish God say : "I will visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." Here is not the least allusion to an everlasting life, though I do think this punishment was more likely to deter men from committing crimes than the Christian doctrine of everlasting punishment without repentance.

Now this repentance ; this coming at the eleventh hour has been the cause of half the wickedness of the Christian world. How often do we see men who have spent their whole lives in committing depredations on their fellow-men, who have committed every crime, even to murder, when at last brought to the scaffold by the laws of their country, at the last moment cry out, the Lord Jesus is ready to receive their soul ! This shows the inutility of the doctrine. The most hardened and wicked wretch when at last he finds himself in the hands of justice and sees there is no prospect of ever again escaping, makes the Bible his companion, and then comes the repentance that is to take him to the paradise of happiness. Would it not have been better to have taught this wretched being to seek consolation in the virtue and rectitude of his own actions, than to teach him that, after all his life of wickedness, by saying a few prayers he knows not what, there is in store for him an eternity of happiness ? Even the Jews appear at the commencement of the Christian era to have had a very imperfect notion of the soul, for it appears by the writings, attributed to the men who are said to have been the companions of Jesus, that the Jews, expected a resurrection of the body as well as soul.

There is another class of people, who are great advocates for the immortality of the soul—those, whose fortunate circumstances have placed them in that happy situation, where they have been enabled to gratify every desire to satiety. These people, when through the fulness of enjoyment they can enjoy no more, like Solomon, cry out, "There is nothing new under the sun, and all is vanity and vexation of spirit." These people, when they can enjoy no more on earth, turn their attention to a world to come, when they expect a succession of enjoyments that will last for ever. This was the class the Bishop of Llandaff was so fearful of having their faith disturbed, in his apology for the Bible. It was pride that first taught the immortality of the soul. The Grecian philosophers saw that man had gathered some knowledge, that knowledge was increasing, and all other animals remained stationary, and without examining what might be the cause, at once, pronounced, that man had an immortal principle in him ; without

once considering the number of generations that had gone before, and that man had been accumulating this knowledge for ages with which he was so puffed up. I do not think the doctrine of the immortality any benefit to mankind, and as taught by the Christian, a great evil. Some of the reasons I have stated, and I think it would be much better to teach man to find his consolation in the approval of his own actions in this life, than by deluding him with notions that only tend to make him wicked and unhappy. VERO.

THE INDIAN'S LETTER.—NO. III.

Take away the revenues of the clergy and leave humble Christianity to stand by itself, unaided by income; unsupported by bayonets, and exposed naked to the Deist's quiver, Christ's temporal and spiritual kingdoms would fall in less than seven years; there would not be left even a stupid negro to support the Church. Every barefaced shameless action of the Christian, only shows the weakness of his tenets, and the strength of his power. The priest, the soldier, and the judge, are now the Christian's gods; and to them the tottering Church looks up for support and protection. The Holy Ghost now makes his appearance in the visible form of pikes, swords, pistols, muskets, bayonets, powder, and ball catridges. The Almighty thunders in the drum, and Jesus Christ is the fifer of the regiment. The Kingdom of Heaven consists of places and pensions, paradise, a Bishop's See and Church livings; Hell, the jails, where the wicked Deists and Materialists must waste their days in want and misery; exposed to the foul calumny of brutalized Christians, who are as merciless as their progenitors the Jews, in the days of Moses, Joshua, and Samuel. This must have an end: they are but men, and truth will at length prevail over them. Church revenues will one day fall; the struggle may be great, but cannot be evaded. If truth and justice are brought in as umpires, all may end well. But if the soldier be called on to decide, then red ruin and desolation will pour along torrents of smoking destruction; and, in the end, the soldier will destroy both the Kings and Priests.

The kind, gentle, humane, good Christian, says to the liberal, pay your dues; disturb not our proceedings, and you may enjoy your private opinion in peace. But if you dare to expose our absurdities, or detect our frauds, we will treat you with remorseless outrage. The simple Liberal only says—you are a man subject to error; you are deceived yourself, and you are deceiving others: I can prove your doctrine false; your creed a scandal to humanity; your whole proceedings highly inimical to society; however, I only wish to clear this up in an amicable and reasonable manner, by arguments drawn from history, and those books you call holy, divine, and sacred, but which I call obscene, foul, evil, false and foolish. O! thou blasphemer, cries the meek, humble Christian—away with him to prison; he dares to *reason* against the word of God, by which I enjoy heaven on earth; and will obtain a heavenly earth in heaven: he disputes my revealed religion, which was given to Moses and Jesus Christ, and which even Mahomed, although a wild Arab, knew nothing about: he wants to open hell, and shut heaven against me: he wants to take away my dear sacred perquisites and Church livings, and make me work for my bread, and listen to truth, mercy, and goodness, which thou knowest, O Lord! no Churchman can endure. Torment this disciple of truth, therefore. O gaoler, and let

us fervently pray, that the day may come, when we may burn him as our pious forefathers burnt their opposers, and cry hallelujah round the bonfire which roasts him ! Or, O terrible Jehovah, for thou delightest in tremendous sacrifices, and the murder of thousands, and extirpation of nations, plan again, I beseech thee, another massacre of Saint Bartholomew and give our swords not three days, but for thy glory, three weeks or months, to drink the blood of Deists, Atheists, and Materialists. Vindicate thy revealed religion, by such horrors as reduced Canaan, and unpeopled Peru and Mexico !

Here is a very proper prayer for a sublime Christian ; and, indeed, we had better keep a sharp look out ; for, I think, I have already heard some whispers, at least, of a wish to extirpate all infidels in this republic ; and we are authorized to impute no compunction to Christians of any description. That they would rejoice and offer up thanksgivings to their idol after such a slaughter, I am confident. Such is the principles instilled into the early mind by those detestable books, the Bible and Testament ; the first and second will of the immutable and incomprehensible God which they adore. O men ! for shame, so long, so obstinately, to cry up weak, wicked lies for truth ; to pretend to a knowledge of what you say is incomprehensible ; to pretend to sights, calls, revelations, and visions, which ye never experienced ; which ye know are palpable untruths, vain childish tales, that even the most ignorant and superstitious of your followers believe not, and only admit on courtesy, that you, in return, may extend the same credit to their future visions, sights, and calls, when, matured in deceit and impudence, they bring forth some bungling figment to support their sanctity.

This fabricated inconsistent tale of revealed religion is at once the most daring and imposing falsehood, that human genius and depravity could invent, or the credulity of fond, foolish, ignorant man swallow without suffocation. According to the Jews and Christians, God has only revealed himself to man three times since the creation ; once to Noah ; a second time to Moses ; and a third and last time to a few Jews in Palestine through his son Jesus Christ. Now, according to the historical account of these his divine and merciful revelations, he might as well have been silent on the occasion ; for, in the first place, nobody would believe Noah, and God must have known this ; so he drowned the world, as he intended to do. Here the revelation was of no use, and the Almighty had the satisfaction of drowning mankind, because they would not believe he was a cruel, implacable tyrant. The second time, he revealed himself to an exiled murderer on Mount Horeb ; he made him (Moses) a complete conjuror, and sent him to play slight-of-hand tricks at Pharaoh's Court. God here played the most unaccountable pranks that ever the most cruel and capricious tyrant could invent, to plague poor frail man with.

We are only pleased, when we reflect, that the whole is a fable of Jewish invention. Whether the story of these people be truth or falsehood, it abounds with fraud, blood, and indiscriminate slaughter : the gloomy horde always exulting in plunder : the tremendous God Jehovah, thundering in black clouds on Sinai, or ruminating in silence in the camp, was terrible and vindictive, cruel, vengeful, jealous, and unjust. For what, we ask, did he reveal himself to the Jews. The duration of their kingdom was short compared with other nations of the world, and, during their existence as a peo-

ple, although they had the almighty Jehovah for engineer and architect, they left no token, sign, or amusement upon earth to mark the divinity of their artificer, or the beauty of his invention. Their boasted temple was a plain house loaded and filled with barbarous figures and frieze work, in which the Bull Apis was not forgotten, and serves, at once, to show their want of invention, and the author of their religion. They seem to have been made to accumulate wealth and keep it altogether when got; and as they had then a city and house to hold gold, silver, and brass, they filled their horde to their own destruction: for their wealth drew on them kings to plunder their hive; and their atrocities, pride, and unsocial manners, cut them off from respect as prisoners of war. Where is the utility of their revelation? Their God Jehovah, could not save them from the hand of Vespasian, nor deliver them from the Roman legions. Twice, we see, the Almighty has failed in his scheme of universal happiness through the means of revelation. Need we pursue the thread of the third divine mission?

Behold the modern revealed religion! Consider whence it sprung. This tale concerns ourselves; therefore it ought to be carefully investigated. On it, our eternal salvation, our future woe or happiness in another life depends: therefore, we should be minute in our enquiry, and as certain, to an azimuth, of every how, and when, and why, and wherefore pertaining to it. Come, then, priests and prelates—come all divines and laymen, help us to the truth; assist us with your learning, wisdom, sense, reason, and understanding fully to comprehend this grand subject:—

Priest. You must read and believe your Bible.

Answer. I can and do read the Bible; but I am candid; I do not believe its statements: for I cannot comprehend its meaning; To me it seems a gross collection of fables and atrocities, too foul for human practice, or too trifling for human wisdom.

Priest. You are a heretic; you are an unbeliever; you will be damned. You are unworthy of mercy. God will punish you for ever and ever in hell for daring to disbelieve his holy word.

Answer. Holy father, this again appears very strange to me that God will damn me for not believing what I cannot understand, and what you cannot explain. Why should God, if he wished me to know any thing, not tell me in such plain terms, that I could not mistake his meaning, and at the same time convince me of it himself who was speaking to me? Why not reveal himself to all mankind in one moment, which he could do, if he thought proper, and not send men to write a book full of falsehoods and atrocities, which nobody can understand, and which serve no purpose but for priests to detail out for pay, under the name of revealed religion.

LAWYERS AND THEOLOGIANS.

Mr. Editor—It has always appeared to me, who have studied, and for several years, practised law, that its professors have walked hand in hand, with the professors of theology. As their end, in confounding the reason of man, and abridging his natural freedom, is exactly the same, they have adjusted means to that end in a way entirely similar.

The divine thunders out his anathemas with more noise and terror against the breach of one of his positive institutions, or the neglect of some of his trivial forms, than against the neglect or breach of those duties prescribed

by a sense of justice, which by these forms and institutions he pretends to enforce. The lawyer has his forms and his positive institutions too, and he adheres to them with a veneration altogether as religious. The worst cause cannot be so prejudicial to the litigant, as his attorney's or counsellor's ignorance or neglect of these forms. A law-suit is like an ill managed dispute, in which the first object is soon out of sight, and the parties end on a matter wholly foreign to that on which they began. In a law-suit, the question is, who has a right to a certain house or farm? And this question is daily determined, not on the evidence of the right, but on the observance, or neglect of some forms of words in use with the gentlemen of the law, about which there is even among themselves such a disagreement, that the most experienced veterans in the profession, can never be positively assured that they are not mistaken.

Let us expostulate with those learned sages—these priests of the sacred temple of justice. Are we judges of our own property? By no means. You then, who are initiated into the mysteries of the blindfold goddess, inform me whether I have a right to eat the bread I have earned by the hazard of my life—of the sweat of my brow? The grave doctor answers me in the affirmative. The reverend serjeant replies in the negative; the learned barrister reasons on one side and on the other, and concludes nothing. What shall I do? An antagonist starts up and presses me hard. I enter the field, and retain these three persons to defend my cause. My cause which two farmers from the plough could have decided in half an hour, takes the court twenty years. I am, however, at the end of my labour, and have in reward for all my toil and vexation, a judgment in my favour. But hold—a sagacious commander in the adversary's army has found a flaw in the proceeding. My triumph is turned into mourning. I have used *or*, instead of *and*, or some mistake, small in appearance, but dreadful in its consequences, and have the whole of my success quashed in a writ of error. I remove my suit; I shift from court to court; I fly from equity to law, and from law to equity. Equal uncertainty attends me every where; and a mistake, in which I had no share, decides at once on my liberty and property; sending me from the court to a prison, and adjudging my family to beggary and famine. I am innocent, gentlemen, of the darkness and uncertainty of your science. I never obscured it with absurd and contradictory notions, nor confounded it with chicane and sophistry. You have excluded me from any share in the conduct of my own cause; the science was too deep for me; I acknowledge it; but it was too deep even for yourselves: You have made the way so intricate, that you are yourselves lost in it: You err, and you punish me for your errors.

The delay of the law is, you will tell me, a trite topic, and which of its abuses have not been too severely felt not to be often complained of? A man's property is to serve for the purposes of his support; and, therefore, to delay a determination concerning that, is the worst injustice, because it cuts off the very end and purpose for which I applied to the judicature for relief. Quite contrary in case of a man's life: there the determination can hardly be too much protracted. Mistakes in this case are as often fallen into as in any other, and if the judgment be sudden, the mistakes are the most irretrievable of all others. Of this the lawyers are themselves sensible, and they have brought it into a maxim—*De morte hominis nulla est*

cunctatio longa. But what could have induced men to reverse the rules and to contradict that reason which dictated them, I am utterly unable to guess. A point concerning property, which ought, for the reasons I just mentioned, to be most speedily decided, frequently exercises the wit of successions of lawyers for many generations. But the question concerning a man's life; that great question in which no delay ought to be counted tedious, is commonly determined in twenty four hours at the utmost. It is not to be wondered at that injustice and absurdity should be inseparable companions.

Ask of politicians the end for which laws were originally designed; and they will answer, that the laws were designed as a protection for the poor and weak against the oppression of the rich and powerful. But surely no pretence can be so ridiculous; a man might as well tell me he has taken off my load, because he has changed the burthen. If the poor man be not able to support his suit, according to the vexatious and expensive manner established in civilized countries, has not the rich as great an advantage over him as the strong has over the weak in a state of nature? But we will not place the state of nature in competition with political society, which is the absurd usurpation of man. In a state of nature, it is true, that a man of superior force may beat or rob me; but then it is also true, that I am at full liberty to defend myself, or make reprisal by surprise or by cunning, or by any other way in which I may be superior to him. But in political society, a rich man may rob me another way. I cannot defend myself; for money is the only weapon with which we are allowed to fight. And if I attempt to avenge myself, the whole force of that society is ready to complete my ruin.

A parson once said, that, where mystery begins, religion ends. Cannot I say, as truly at least, of human laws, that where mystery begins, justice ends? It is hard to say, whether the doctors of law or divinity have made the greater advances in the lucrative mystery. The lawyers as well as the theologians, have erected another reason besides natural reason; and the result has been, another justice besides natural justice. They have so bewildered the world and themselves in unmeaning forms and ceremonies, and so perplexed the plainest matters with metaphysical jargon, that it carries the highest danger to a man out of that profession, to make the least step without their advice and assistance. Thus by confining to themselves the knowledge of the foundation of all mens' lives and properties, they have reduced all mankind to the most abject and servile dependence. We are tenants at the will of these gentlemen for every thing; and a metaphysical quibble is to decide whether the greatest villain breathing shall meet his deserts, or escape with impunity; or whether the best man in society shall not be reduced to the lowest and most despicable condition it affords. In a word, the injustice, delay, puerility, false refinement, and affected mystery of the law are such, that many who live under it come to admire and envy the expedition, simplicity, and equality of arbitrary judgments.

VERITAS.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 1923.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible,
By the Secretary.

LECTURE XIII. (Continued from page 107.)

Proceeding in our examination of the Old Testament, we are at no loss to discover that the patriarch Isaac was a plain simple man, too credulous, and oftener the dupe than the deceiver. Although, like his father Abraham, he attempted a fraud on Abimelech, by denying his wife, he gained nothing by it.

In the 24th chapter of Genesis, we have a very singular account of the courtship by which Isaac obtained a wife; and a still more curious narrative as to the manner in which Abraham compelled his servant to take an oath. The indelicacy into which an explanation of the way in which this oath was administered would unavoidably lead, compels me to refer you to the form of taking it as recorded in the 2d and 3d verses of this chapter.

This servant of Abraham seems to have been appointed to the office of matrimonial negociator to Isaac. Accordingly he sets out with his camels for the land of Mesopotamia; and when arrived there, he invokes the Jewish divinity to assist in pointing out the favorite object to which young Isaac was to be united. He speaks in the following manner: "And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: and let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and he shall say, drink; and I will give thy camels to drink also;—let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby I shall know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master."

Perhaps this messenger of Isaac, like many superstitious people of the present day, believed that matches were made in heaven. If so, one would think they ought to be better than they are. Be this as it may, it seems that Rebekah, who came to the well with the pitcher on her shoulder, was marked out by the negociator of Isaac to become the wife of his young master. Accordingly, he made her a present of a gold ear-ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight, of gold. After this, Rebekah invited the messenger of Isaac to her father's house, where he took care to speak of the splendour and riches of his master, which Isaac was one day destined to inherit. He gave also presents to the father and brother of Rebekah, and so managed his embassy that he returned to Abraham with the damsel. The marriage was immediately celebrated; and there ends the story.

It is evident that Jacob, the immediate descendant of Isaac, was always a tricky rogue. His name, indeed, signifies a *cheat*. Even before he was born, it is said that he took his brother by the heel, and by his strength he had power with God: Hosea xii. 2. At the time of their birth he did the same. These gambols are unknown in modern births. But who can

doubt of them when they have the Lord's word for it? The bargain of his brother's birthright was a very unfair transaction; and the way he procured his father's blessing by falsehood and deceit, show that the *saints* have never scrupled to obtain their ends by any means. It must be owned that the greater part of those whom the church has placed in heaven, have been the most notorious villains on earth.

In the early part of Jacobs history, as detailed in the 28th chapter of Genesis, we find him and his brother Esau, engaged in a rambling excursion through the country in quest of female companions. In going towards a place called Haran, Jacob was overtaken by night, and having laid himself down by the wayside, on a pillow of stones, as the story goes, he fell asleep. Here it was that he saw, in a vision, the longest ladder that ever was made. One end rested on the earth, and the other reached to heaven; "and behold," says the text, "the angels of God ascending and descending on it." Perhaps (observes Palmer) this is the same ladder that the Babel builders made use of when they built their wonderful Tower, and the angels that ascended and descended might have been no other than the brick and mortar men, employed on that wonderful fabric. This ladder if it reached to the nearest point of the heavens: that is to the moon; must have been two hundred and forty thousand miles long. A wonderful ladder indeed! and he who dreamt about it, must surely have been inspired. If we reflect but a single moment on the contemptible idea of associating the character of God with such dreams and dreamers, we are compelled to conclude that the most obstinate fanaticism, the most prejudiced superstition would blush for such impertinent tenacity. What has a dreaming old man and a long ladder to do with a divine system of religion? Nothing at all. The idle stories, indeed, contained in the Bible are of themselves sufficient to work its destruction in the estimation of all reasonable and reflecting minds. When Jacob had aroused from his ladder building slumbers, he still seemed to be in a trance—He fancied that he was in the house of God and at the very gates of heaven. He says "this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." The imagination of man when set on fire by religious enthusiasm, conjectures every thing, believes every thing, and constantly abandons the cause of reason and truth.

Toward the close of this chapter, we find Jacob entering into a conditional stipulation with Jehovah, that if he would find him with bread and other necessities, he should be his God, implying at the same time, that if he noticed any deficiencies he would have little or nothing to do with him. "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God." According to this Bible there is a great deal of bargain and sale business going on between terrestrial beings and the Jewish divinity. All these things show what low and imperfect conceptions the writer must have entertained even of his own deity. This single circumstance proves beyond all controversy that this is not a book of inspiration; for if a God had inspired man at all, he would have infused into his mind more correct and exalted notions of his immortal attributes, and of the divine plenitude of his character.

In the 29th chapter, we find Jacob at the house of his uncle Laban, who beat him with his own weapons, and put the wrong sister to bed to him on

the wedding night. This mistake, however, was easily rectified, as he had the other at the same rate of service. Thus had this patriarch the two sisters for wives, who were also his own cousins, and their two maids for concubines, which in our days, would constitute the crimes of polygamy and adultery—all very necessary to form the character of a Jewish saint.

The knavish scheme of the hazle rods, by which he got the best of Laban's cattle, was most unfair dealing. It has however, never succeeded with any of our modern swindlers, the *Lord* not being with them in the same way as he was with the patriarch. It appears that these practices of Jacob caused a misunderstanding with his father-in-law, whose service he thought it prudent to leave; Rachel having first taken care to secure her father's gods. Recollecting his base conduct to Essau, Jacob on his return, thought it best to pacify him with a present, which he despatched beforehand; and on their meeting he addressed him with obsequiousness and dissimulation; a striking characteristic of the man.

In the 32d chapter of Genesis, we have an account of the athletic exploits of Jacob and Jehovah. At first we are told that the patriarch wrestled with a man. In the title to the chapter it is said to have been an angel. But at the termination of the contest, the pugnacious adversary turns out to have been deity itself. But whether it was god an angel, or a man, is of no consequence, as the story carries on its face the marks of fiction.

On Jacob's settlement in Sechem, the young prince of the country fell in love with his daughter Dinah, with whom he had an amour, and was desirous of marrying her. This match however, not pleasing Jacob's sons, they had recourse to a scheme of the blackest treachery. Pretending that it would dishonor their family if their sister formed an alliance with an uncircumcised person, they induced Hamar and Schem to submit to the ceremony, and their example was followed by all the men of the place. While they were smarting under the operation, Simeon and Levi attacked them, sword in hand, murdered all the males, made their wives and children prisoners, and plundered the city. This action, it is said, was regretted by Jacob, as it would make him "stink" among the inhabitants of the country, who might fall on him, and slay his whole family. But where was the reason in this case to be under apprehension? If two men, as is asserted, slew all the inhabitants of a city, how easy would it have been for the whole of Jacob's household to defend themselves against a few country people? It is to be observed that it was this butchering Levi whom the Jewish deity selected to be the founder and head of his priesthood. Can it be surprising, therefore, that his successors should have been the most barbarous and blood thirsty monsters that ever appeared on the earth. In imitation of this holy example, Charlemagne, at the instigation of the priests, ordered 4000 Saxons to be baptized, and then their throats to be cut! Blessed and glorious examples of Jewish and Christian piety; of peace on earth, and good will to men!

Amazing as these bible absurdities must seem to every observant mind, they are not more so than that one third of the human race should have been upwards of 4000 years led along from day to day; from year to year; from generation to generation, in passive obedience to those who subsist by the ridiculous legend. For this, (observes an intelligent writer) I can in no way account but by reverting to the probable reason why the so-

phiatry of the Old Testament had not been fully exploded. This reason I find to consist in the union of three grand events. The *first*, the delegation of power by a people to a sovereign. The *second*, the avarice and wickedness of these sovereigns, who required, and ultimately attained a complete ascendancy over the minds and labor of their subjects. And, *thirdly*, the introduction of the Bible at a time when the ascendancy had besotted the popular spirit, and made man fit to be acted on by sorceries, divinations and sacrifices. It was in this imbecile state of the moral world, according to their own history, that the Jewish lawgiver began his curious reign. The Israelites had long been immersed in idolatry and wickedness; but they chiefly complained of the restraints Pharaoh had found it necessary to impose on them. Only the hope of being released from these restraints, induced them to join their own leader, as appears evident from the history of their manifold rebellions. To quell these, this leader found he must resort to miracles, and prophesying—yet neither his miracles nor his prophecies were sufficient to reconcile the Jews to his government. Embarked in an undertaking which he rendered perilous by a show of enthusiasm, he soon discovered that he must live and die with the tribes.

From that period to this, (observes the same writer) "men have been more or less subject to similar fanaticism. By means of superstition, the Mosaic ritual gained ground against that of the most laborious idolaters of these days. Moses and his people had mutually sacrificed to a Deity they knew no more about than the Baalites could have known concerning their numerous host of gods. These sacrifices were encouraged, because they afforded opportunities to pillage and sack defenceless villages and ungarded travellers; and, being of no diviner origin than the brain of their legislator, the motives to these pillages and murders always manifested deliberate injustice; and the cruelty of their exactions made the Israelites every where notorious for this vice. Nevertheless succeeding kings adopted the measures their guide had so basely pursued. They received the Bible as the Word of God, because the Bible had made it lawful for the Israelites to murder innocent women, and pull down and destroy whole towns and cities. With divine authority to produce for every cruel law, the Israelitish despots, glorying in their wickedness, and as licentious as they were profane, continued to desolate the unoffending nations with which they were surrounded."

After them came the Greek emperors; and Europeans as well as Americans of this day, are borne down by the perfidies of men, acting by an assumed divine right, although it is evident they are for ever acting wrong. These are facts too much magnified by time—too notorious at this moment to escape the attention and scrutiny of mankind; and such is my opinion of the human race—such my conviction of the rapid progress of intellect—such my idea of our natural love of knowledge, that I have no difficulty in believing there will soon appear a total schism in the superstitious households of faith; that soon the enemy of truth; the foe of justice; the blight of mercy; the source, the preserver of evil; which is *this faith*, shall be superseded by Reason; shall acknowledge the enormity of those errors, and of those iniquities that have usurped her throne, and deluged the earth with blood and with tears.

Mr. Owen.—Letters from Mr. Owen, dated 21st ult. announce his arrival at New Harmony, accompanied by his eldest and two youngest sons, who had crossed the Atlantic with him to aid in his philanthropic plans. "We are now altogether (observes Mr. O.) in good health and spirits, and quite prepared to proceed with and defend the social system against all obstacles and opponents. The cause is progressing substantially, and not slowly, every where. Liberal principles are gaining ground daily among the more intelligent part of every community in which I have been. The weak and ignorant are becoming *nominally* more religious, and this will occupy and amuse the priesthood for sometime; but as the well informed, when they amount to a certain proportion of the population, must influence the others, the day is approaching when the folly and mummery of what is called religion, will vanish speedily from society. We have but to persevere, and success is certain. I am glad to hear from various quarters that the *Correspondent* is doing well, and that many other liberal papers also meet with encouragement."

MISCELLANEOUS.

Arguments proving that the Christian Religion ruins all those States where it is the Established Religion.

Abridged from a work translated from the French, and first published in 1698.

Continued from page 192.

16. *Various Impositions.*—I must not forget here the profit which they make by means of their *Father Titrier*, or title-maker, as they call him, especially in the religious communities, for whom he forges titles, that they may deprive the laics of their estates. The Popes having erected marriage into a sacrament; by this means, they render themselves judges of the birth and legitimacy of the children of princes and great men, which keep them in a dependence upon the Popes; for, under pretext that marriage is a sacrament, according to them, and that the Pope is the sovereign judge of sacraments, he can bastardise or legitimate whom he pleases. They often attempt to draw within their own cognisance all testaments, treaties, act, and contracts betwixt man and man, under the pretext that the oaths, by which they are confirmed, are matters whereof the violation concerns the conscience. In this manner, they would render themselves absolute masters of all the estates, as well as of the quiet and honour, of mankind. The exemption which the ecclesiastics plead from the ordinary courts of justice occasions a great disorder in society, of which the clergy make their advantage. They get money also by granting dispensations for eating meat in Lent, and at other times. They also squeeze money from sick persons, or their friends, for carrying their pretended sacrament and holy oils to them. Their mischievous clergy have a great number of other methods to plunder the people of their substance; and they invent new ones from time to time, or extend and enlarge the old ones. I confess that all the riches, which the clergy individually do thus cunningly procure from the people, is not absolutely lost to the kingdom; because they either spend

it themselves, and so it circulates again among the people ; but it is certain that this money would have been much more profitable to the state, had it been in the hands of those addicted to trade, husbandry, or handicrafts, and who have children to breed up. Moreover, it is not true that the ignorant Christians give their estates *willingly* to the priests : for they are the poor people whom they have made drunk with their idolatries and superstitions ; threatening them with hell and purgatory if they do not give them, and promising them heaven if they give. Therefore, those who believe their follies are under a moral necessity of giving them. But instead of applying this money to any sort of use, these villains spend it in excess of eating and drinking, and other lewd debaucheries, or otherwise hoard it up in their coffers, or turn usurers.

ARTICLE II. The second article relates to the excessive multitude of ecclesiastics in France. They are computed at three hundred thousand males and females ; whereof, I am sure, forty thousand males would be sufficient for the service of their pretended church, such as it is ; so that there remain two hundred and sixty thousand useless ecclesiastics. Then it is to be observed, that three hundred thousand adult persons, such as they, are worth double the number of others taken out of the common mass of people, especially if we consider that the greatest part of those ecclesiastics are males. Let us reckon the work, then, to which those two hundred and sixty thousand useless persons ought to apply themselves only at three-pence per day, one with another, without victuals ; and let us suppose, also, that they work three hundred days in a year, the unprofitable holy days being abolished ; that amounts to above eleven millions five hundred thousand livres per annum, pure loss. I am willing to abate a million and a half for the lace, points, &c. made by some nuns, and what some poor priests and monks work for in their gardens ; yet there remains still above ten millions of pure loss, without taking notice of the contagion of their bad example of idleness, which corrupts the people : and, besides, it is certain that they spend their time in doing mischief. I take no notice neither of their maintenance, which is ill bestowed, and is another robbery that they commit on the nation, seeing it ought to be employed in maintaining others who are more useful. This article amounts to as much as the other ; for these people, as I have said, own that, by their professions, they are not to work or to marry, and so devour the rest of the laborious people that have families. This is a robbery upon the commonwealth, according to the axiom—we are not born for ourselves, but for our country and children.

ARTICLE III. Mendicant friars, in particular, are a very great charge to the kingdom, all of them being absolutely needless ; and these begging friars are so much more intolerable than the endowed monasteries, as, by their voluntary begging and laziness, they are very chargeable to the people, who maintain them richly, one way or other. For ordinarily they eat the best, and drink abundance of wine ; while many honest people, who are useful subjects in the kingdom, have much ado to get bread by their labour. They are, moreover, greater hypocrites, and more ignorant than the rest of the clergy, and abundance of handsome young women choose them for their confessors, because of their seeming devotion and mortification ; under which pretext they commit a deal of uncleanness. It is supposed that there are above sixty thousand of these monks in the kingdom ;

let us reckon, then, that they cost the kingdom but sixpence a-piece per day, one with another, that will exceed six millions of livres per annum. This is the least they spend: for most part of them live in good cities or towns, where they fare deliciously, but take care, as much as they can, to conceal their good cheer, because that would prevent the people's giving them so much. I have several times seen divers spits full of choice pullets, venison, and wild-fowl, roasting for them in by-houses (at a little distance from their convents,) and they would tell me, that these things were sent out of charity to the good fathers.

ARTICLE IV. All these several sorts of ecclesiastics live unmarried. The ecclesiastics in France are computed, as I said, at three hundred thousand, who, being all of them unmarried, render three hundred thousand other adult persons, which Nature had designed them for wives, useless for propagation. If the rest of the nation should do thus, it would be entirely extinguished in fifty or sixty years. It is observed, from the registers of births and burials in most kingdoms, that there is nearly an equal proportion betwixt the birth and death of both sexes; which is a proof that they are born for one another. Now, if, according to the observation of naturalists, six hundred thousand persons double in two hundred years time. These, in eight hundred years, ought to be nine millions, according to the ordinary progress of generation. But, because the number of ecclesiastics was not near so great at that time as at present; and, moreover, because France was not near so well peopled in those days as it hath been since, we shall content ourselves with a fourth part of these nine millions. Without the people a country is worth nothing; about thirty years ago, the people of France might have been valued at fifteen hundred livres a-piece, one with another: so that the loss of two millions and two hundred and fifty thousand souls, amounts to three thousand three hundred and fifty millions, which, being divided by eight hundred, is above four millions loss each year; and this is so much the more palpable, that these two millions and a half of people, being added to those that were already in the kingdom, would have increased in value, and have augmented the riches of the kingdom, and of the community: for, the more populous a country is, the more valuable it is, as is also every individual in the kingdom.

ARTICLE V. The clergy possess one half of the estates, real and personal, in the kingdom of France, which half, about thirty years ago, we have computed at 200,000,000 per annum: then it is to be noted, that these estates are in mainmort; that is to say, lie dead, because they can neither engage nor alienate them, nor employ them in trade; so that they are less advantageous to the country than if they were in the hands of men fit for commerce, handicrafts, husbandry, or manufactures, or that these estates passed by inheritance from father to son; so that, by necessary consequence, their being in the hands of the clergy is very much against the benefit of the kingdom. Hence also it follows, that the ecclesiastics may well increase their own riches at the expense of the people, whose estates they are able to acquire; whereas, the people can never make any advantage of them. They are, moreover, as so many usurers, and make profit from the industry and labour of the people, by lending them money at a great interest, which is very pernicious to a state. They are, in this respect, abundantly worse than the Jews, who ordinarily are very covetous, spend

little, and are great usurers; nor are there any land estates to be purchased from them, because they ordinarily have none. Yet they are abundantly more profitable to a state than the clergy, because divers of them traffic by sea, employ vessels, mariners, and other people of business; and do, moreover, maintain and bring up families. It is clear that the kingdom of France is deprived of the use of one half of its members, because one half of its substance is in mainmort; for the more of a country's wealth that there is so, the less they have of activity, motion, commerce, or credit, one among another, or with strangers. Hence it comes to pass, that countries, which have a great part of their wealth in mainmort, cannot drive any considerable trade, even though their mischievous religion should not have unpeopled them, as it infallibly does, unless they have abundance more of ready circulating money than other nations, which have more credit and hopes for trade, because they have more funds proper to be engaged in the same.

I have valued the revenues of all the estates, real and personal, of France, and the fruits of the people's industry, altogether at 1,000,000,000 of livres per annum; and the whole stock therein, comprehending the people, at 20,000,000,000, at twenty years' purchase: and likewise in England, I have valued the same stock and product at 550,000,000 livres per ann., and the whole stock therein comprehending the people, at 11,000,000,000, at twenty years' purchase. But if all those estates were in mainmort, they would not be worth the tenth, nay, not the twentieth, part so much; nor, indeed, worth any thing but the present enjoyment of the people, who would be very few in number, as I have already said, and like so many savages, having neither commerce, arts, manufactures, sciences nor money; for no man would work but for himself and his family, and that too but from hand to mouth. These, and many more, are the inconveniences that would follow upon having all estates in mainmort. But, perhaps, some opinionative persons may say, that to carry on the trade of a nation, it is enough that half of the wealth of a country is not in mainmort; which is just as much as if they should say, that it is as well to have half the body paralytic, and deprived of the use of half of its members, as not to be so at all, because a man may still live in that condition. But who does not perceive that this is a distempered and a languishing condition; and that, in such a case, a man cannot do half the business that he might do if he were in perfect health. It cannot be reasonably denied that, the more vigorous a body is, the better it does its work; so that, the more credit there is in a nation, the more are all its effects in motion: the more arts, industry, agriculture, and commerce flourish there: and the country becomes more populous in proportion. What a mighty disorder, then, does it occasion, that all these monks and priests, (who are the subjects of a foreign prince, [the popes] seeing they have taken the oaths to him, and who is moreover, of necessity the hereditary enemy of the State,) should be thus, with all their wealth sequestered from the State, in respect of all those things wherein they might be useful to it, viz. in regard of imposts, and the charges of the State, and trade, as also in regard of propagation, and obedience to their sovereign, as other subjects: that they, I say, should be no otherwise united to a State, but so as to ruin it and enrich themselves and his Holiness by its spoils. Let us suppose the estates that are in mainmort among the ecclesiastics possessed by merchants or tradesmen, the commerce would have been

much greater in France ; and, by consequence, the kingdom would have been more rich and potent.

ARTICLE VI. Relates to the great quantity of plate which they have in their churches and convents, and in those places they call their treasuries,—as St. Denis near Paris, Notre Dame de Liesse, and Des Ardillieres : and other places of that nature. This one superstitious and foolish custom must needs have robbed the public commerce of divers millions. Suppose that, in the whole, it had not exceeded twenty millions, that would have at least amounted to several millions per annum amongst the people. However, I will not take upon me to determine how far this loss extends, because I do not know what quantity of plate they have ; for the clergy never tell the truth in these cases, and very seldom in any others.

ARTICLE VII. Relates to the constant practice of the clergy in hoarding up money, which is of more importance than the preceding article ; for, seeing many of them possess great revenues, and are neither allowed to trade nor to marry, and by consequence, have no lawful offspring, they betake themselves to the amassing of vast sums under the pretext of providing for their nephews and nieces, as the Popes do ; and they do not, for the most part, provide for them either till after their death, which is doubly prejudicial to commerce. Moreover they are very covetous, and do not give alms to the poor, although they be thereunto obliged by the intention of their founders : so that there is ground to believe that all the clergy together, secular and regular, of both sexes, might have constantly, before this war, at least fifty millions of useless money to the public, in their coffers, or the hands of the public notaries. Whence it is easy to perceive that the public lost considerably by this money, which, in commerce, would have brought immense profit to the kingdom, helped to pay taxes, employed abundance of people, and contributed to propagation. This article must certainly amount to several millions : I will not determine how many ; but, without this and the preceding one are to be reckoned, at least, at eight or ten millions loss per annum.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered in the Hall of the “ Free Press Association,” on Sunday (to-morrow) the 20th inst. at 11 o'clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued at 3 o'clock.

Removal.—The office of the Correspondent is removed to 422 Broadway, near Canal street.

. The first four numbers of the *Correspondent* being now reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

John Dixon, printer, rear of No. 84 Maiden-lane.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 14.

NEW YORK, APRIL 26, 1928.

Vol. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

Mr. Editor—If you consider the following *hints*, worthy of a place in your interesting paper, you are requested to insert them and oblige E. W.

HINTS.

First. If God is the creator of all things and beings, and the endower of all things and beings, the Devil, from whom all sin flows into the world, had his existence and endowments from God : consequently sin first emanated from God.

Second. If God created all things, and pervades and animates all things, and is perfect ; sin cannot exist, because imperfection cannot exist where perfection exists.

Third. If God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent, and therefore perfect, all things must be in subjection to him, because where these powers exist, nothing can exist contrary to the will of the being so endowed.

Fourth. If God is perfect, and has existed from eternity, his works have also all existed from eternity, because, if there was a time when God's works were not completed, God's works were imperfect ; otherwise, if we say that God's works were made in the natural order and certainty of physical fate, and are subject to, and governed by this order and certainty, he is then imperfect. But Christians say God is perfect.

Fifth. If God is perfect, all his works are perfect, because a perfect being cannot create an imperfect work.

Sixth. If God is all merciful, which he must be if he is endowed with infinite perfection, misery could not exist, because infinite mercy cannot witness misery.

Seventh. If God is infinite in wisdom and power, all his works are, and for ever were, perfect, and in accordance with his will and pleasure, because the works of infinite power and wisdom are perfect. But the Christian creed supposes vast and signal interruptions in the established order of things as evidence of the very existence of their God.

Eighth. If God is perfect, all sensitive beings of a similar grade, are equal in happiness, because partiality exists only where imperfection exists.

Athens, April 14th, 1828.

CATO.

NATURAL PHENOMENA.

Mr. Editor—The priests who set up for sages and hold the people in subjection by means of an assumed superiority of knowledge, never choose to confess that they know not the causes of remarkable occurrences, because that would reduce them to the same level with the people. Every set of priests, therefore, throughout the priest-afflicted world, are provided

with "a full, true, and particular account" of the origin of the principal natural phenomena observable in the economy of the universe. The Genesis account is one of the most imperfect, as well as erroneous of these inventions. It is plain that if the Deity had inspired Moses to describe the cosmogony, he would have prompted him to give such an outline of the creation, and of the objects which the various parts of it were to answer, as would consist with subsequent observations. But the entire ignorance it evinces of the nature and causes of the atmospheric facts, proves that at the time it was composed nothing was known concerning the natural sciences, and that any tale could impose on the vulgar that it suited the sacerdotal worthies to circulate. There came rain from the clouds. Then (said the priests) there must be a reservoir behind the firmament; we must say God put the heavens to divide the waters. There were two shining bodies; we must say they were put there to light the earth. [Of the vivifying *heat* of the sun no mention is made, although it is the principal use of that body.] Thus every thing existing is still affirmed to have been made for the particular purpose to which man applies it; and we see in the never ending argument of "design," the same convenient mode of accounting for what we do not comprehend that has been pursued from the earliest periods.

Now that the solar system and the knowledge of meteorology have become better understood, we can discern the relation of antecedent and consequent among several facts of the nature of which the early nations were wholly ignorant, and therefore assumed that they were expressly designed to answer a particular purpose. All they knew was that the events were productive of certain useful ends; but these ends might have been secondary and subordinate to certain greater results, for any thing they knew to the contrary. The ascribing peculiar functions to the sun and moon which are not fulfilled by experience, only shews in a most forcible manner that *design* may just as well be inferred from false premises as from true ones, and that it is worthless as an argument.

The inhabitants of the Tonga islands believe the account which their priesthood has constructed of the beginning of the existence of these islands, quite as implicitly as good Christians swallow the Mosaic one. According to this tradition, it is believed that there was once nothing but a great sea; that a Giant was one day angling, out of the sky, and that he felt something very heavy at the end of his rod; he pulled it up and it proved to be the island of Tonga. This is one of the simplest derivations that have ever been ascribed to the world, and it is at least full as intelligible as those which more enlightend nations continue to propagate.

The universal propensity to refer natural facts, of which the proximate cause is unknown, to supernatural interposition, will never be subdued so long as the pernicious notion of "design" continues in force. Until mankind shall overcome the repugnance to saying, "I do not know," we shall be infested with false, foolish, and misguiding theories. The ignorant are ever ready to credit legends connected with any remarkable physical fact. The position of a large stone, a peculiarly shaped stone, a deep ravine or fissure, caves, even now serve to hang a supernatural story upon: any thing, with weak minds, is preferable to acknowledging they do not know the cause. Even the black mark along the back of the ass cannot be suffered to remain unexplained. An ancient notion prevails among Christians

that this streak took its date from the day Jesus rode on one, and that he bestowed the mark on the assine race in perpetuity, as an honorary token of the service it rendered him; being in the form of a cross. That this popular story was invented to suit the fact of the ass's stripe is sufficiently apparent, and it is probable that all the ancient accounts of the origin of atmospheric occurrences and remarkable appearances in the substances of nature, were founded on equally unsubstantial grounds.

During the whole of the account of the first pair being put forth out of Eden, we find no mention of any penalty extending beyond the natural life of man. He is told that he shall earn his subsistence by labour and sweat—the woman is informed that she shall bring forth in sorrow. This is the sum of the denunciation! and yet on this is built a most complicated statement of what we have lost by Adam and Eve's sin; of what we should have had if they had not so misbehaved; of the urgent necessity of an intercessor to soften the dreadful severity of the sentence, and to procure by the painful sacrifice of his own life, a partial restoration to the forfeited privileges of the human race. It is truly lamentable to see how easily we suffer ourselves to be duped on the subject of religious belief. Though we have the book of Genesis open for us to examine, wherein nothing is said about future punishment or rewards, we prefer taking the assertion of priests on the subject, who assure us that we were at the time of Adam's sin consigned to eternal posthumous torments, which nothing short of God's own son's death, as an atonement, could possibly avert.

The only two punishments pronounced by God (according to Genesis) continue to operate. Man gets nothing from the earth without labour, and woman's travail is sorrowful enough. But the necessity for labour is no great affliction, and the woman is not compelled to bear children unless she consent. Thus it would seem that all the nonsense about the fall of man, the sinfulness which supervened upon it, the horrible penalties, the necessity for atonement, &c. are the inventions of priestcraft, and have no foundation in the Old Testament.

PHILO.

THE INDIAN'S LETTER.—NO IV.

According to your wishes I shall write concerning the Deity, or, more properly speaking the belief in an Omnipotent being. This being is so wrapped up in gloom, terror, and consequence, that we approach him in thought with trembling and diffidence; and, as we are taught, we think it damnable to doubt, for a moment, his existence, or to question his extreme cruelty, fraud, and injustice. Hence we scarcely come to this investigation with much more than half of our reasoning powers; the rest are absorbed by a legitimate superstition, begotten in youth on our ignorance; matured by precept and example, and confirmed by surrounding bigotry. Let us sever this chain, and, with a modest assurance, undauntedly approach the author of our being as a good and dutiful son would approach a kind and indulgent parent.

Such a being, we feel confident, will not be offended at the liberty we take in using the reason he has been graciously pleased to bestow on us; nor accuse us of blasphemy if we even doubt the representations given of him by the priesthood, or hesitate to credit his imputed attributes. For if he pleased, he could reveal himself to our perfect satisfaction in a moment.

or annihilate us for our temerity. Since, then, he leaves us to doubt, to argue and to reason, it is very probable, that, in some future period, there will be little argument and no doubt on the subject. Reason and sense will never bewilder themselves with incomprehensible metaphysics, in which numberless theses, cases and arguments commence and terminate in absolute conjecture. Religious impostors, when they come forth in some future day, to preach repentance to sinners, for the good of themselves, will only be considered as madmen, fools or knaves ; and, in either case, a cell, some straw and bread and water will act equally as a punishment for crime and a restorative to sanity. Indeed, when we come to consider the thing in a clear light, these very fools, knaves and madmen are proofs against their own divinity. But one of the strongest arguments for the non-existence of the Christian deity, is *the existence of hypocrisy*. For why should he permit a villain to deceive men in his name, when it is only the respect they have for the deity himself which permits the imposition. This, and the absurd, stupid doctrines which the priests of every sect preach up, are almost enough to destroy even the firm belief of a devout deist. Is it not surprising that such things exist in spite of sense, reason, truth and experience ? Is it not surprising that fanatics, who are absolutely madmen, shall make fools of men of sense, or, at least, of apparent sense. At times, I feel myself struck with something which puts on the semblance of truth, and which I entertain for a time, until sober reflection and reason determine against it. Then away goes my creed without leaving a sign of its ever having been. This argues nothing. I trouble no one with the vain cogitation, and, to myself, it only shews me my ignorance and want of solid foundation for thought.

Nothing—never could produce something. Without a something nothing could never have been. Without a creator, nothing could never have been created. From nothing—nothing will ever proceed to eternity. If so, and the case is clear that it must be so, then omnipotence must have had a beginning and a creator. For nothing could never create its nonentity into everlasting and unreducible matter. This, I presume, is a silencer, and he must think deeper than I can who will attempt to explain the mystery farther. But, in reality, there is no mystery in the case. We are all here, and we wonder like fools where we came from : we find this world under our feet, and we wonder who made it. We have a certain account, or rather a number of different accounts when it was made, and we all again wonder how old it is. Then, we think, some great Geni must have made it, and we wonder who he is, or what he is like. All the old women and children can tell you he is like a man. Though some very sage philosophers have said he was like a fish, others an ox, others a monkey or baboon ; some a sun, a moon, a star, an elephant, a crocodile, a shark, an egg, a stock, a stick, a stone, a tree ; until, at last, some say the world is God, and every creature in it a Godling. All this argues only the profound ignorance of man, and the frailty of human nature. But here we must not forget the impudent assertion of those who have dared to say, that they have seen the deity face to face and conversed with him as with a man.

The monsters, tree, plant, ox, monkey, or man, then, comprehend the great Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Incomprehensible Jehovah ; this inconceivable being, who created every thing ; is in every thing ; with-

not being perceivable to sight or feeling, is every where, and only reveals himself to one man, once in two or three thousand years. But, in the interim, plays at slaughtering men and destroying them by universal and partial deluges, by earthquakes, storms, tempests, thunder, lightning, plague, famine, war, battle, murder, massacre, and an infinity of other means, whereby, in the room of being merciful, good, and just, he proves himself to be the most resentful, capricious, cruel, unjust tyrant that even infernal cunning could conceive, or infernal agency produce. It is said, that all nations, rude, savage, and civilized, have an idea of a God; and this is called a proof of the being of a divinity. But this is not true, in the first place; and if it were a fact, would prove nothing; for all their ideas are imperfect, and no two of them agree in any one instance, except some little relation as to his general character of a terrible, resentful, and implacable tyrant, agreeing in principle with a Marius, a Sylla, a Tiberius, or a Nero; still, however, divesting these of any little particle of humanity which might have been in their character. Such Gods deserve not a place in the universe. One thing we can see very plain, and that is, that all the idol makers have been a set of cruel, ignorant, stupid, bigoted fools and knaves. The unparalleled confusion of the Athanasian Creed is a full proof of this; none else is necessary. Repeatedly have the Liberals told the creed-mongers, that they would believe directly if they, the creed-mongers, would explain, or demonstrate, in any degree, their incomprehensible dogmas. I, for one, say plainly, I cannot believe in what I cannot comprehend: and further, I do believe every man who says he believes in what he does not comprehend, to be a base hypocrite, and an unpardonable deceiver; a man who is made up of every kind of falsehood and treachery; a man in whom society can place no trust; a man whose whole business is to impose on the credulous and to betray those he deceives, and whose tremendous Idol, who rides in the whirlwind, lives in the tempest, speaks in thunder, and breathes blood and desolation, sanctifies each action, commends his deceit, approves all his atrocities, and is only wroth when he discovers a trait of humanity in the wretch who adores him. All the Idols of mankind are vindictive, capricious, cruel, revengeful, easily raised to anger, and their fury only to be allayed by blood, slaughter, fire, general ruin, and the destruction of thousands of the weak creatures whom they have formed. This is the character of the great idols, Brama, Odin, Johs, Foh, Moloch, Jehovah and many others. The Greek Jupiter seems to be a being of greater benignity than the others; yet he is nothing better than a parricide, usurper and libertine monarch, for ever committing rapes, adulteries and murders. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that an almighty, allwise, creator and ruler of the universe, would not permit such wretches to profane his name, deceive mankind, and render his own being doubtful and detestable; for we hold it as a maxim, that omitting to do good is a committing of evil: and from what we see and learn by our experience in this world, we must absolutely conclude, that the Christian God must be a very unjust being. Devout persons pretend to see a first cause in the surrounding firmament, and infer, that without something, nothing could have been; yet they make out the great architect to be a mighty nothing, which they call an immaterial spirit, omnipresent, pervading all matter and occupying all space; existing in all things; yet undiscoverable, untangible, indescribable and incompre-

hensible. The idea of a spirit, without form and void of matter ; creating something out of nothing ; composing worlds for his own amusement, and destroying them for his spite, is unaccountably inconsistent and ridiculous, and savours strongly of monastic conception and monkish puerility. It is strange that the character of the Gods in general is that of the worst tyrants among men. Delighting in flattery, homage and supplication ; irritable, unappeaseable, sacrificing every thing to their lusts and resentments ; childish and fickle in their friendships ; curious, cautious, and jealous in their dispositions, and most detestable in all their proceedings. These may be reasons and convincing arguments with Christians in favour of their divinity ; but I candidly confess, that they nearly shake my belief to pieces ; nor have I ever yet met with one convincing reason to hang a proof on ; nor is it possible where all is only conjecture, and where reality can never be established. "How came we here ? How came all things to be ?" they triumphantly ask, as if this was a full solution of the important question. I answer directly and candidly, I do not know more than you, and you know no more about it than the dullest ass on the common. Ay, but they tell me, they do know and they believe. Here I doubt their veracity and question their authority ; for that which makes them to believe fills me with infinite doubt, and leads me to decide directly against all their doctrines, and creeds, and the whole immaterial world ; nor shall I ever believe in any thing without a positive demonstration. So much for the present on this incomprehensible subject.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 1828.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible,
By the Secretary.

LECTURE XIII. (Continued from page 204.)

I HAVE NOW arrived in my examination of the old testament, or Jewish books, at the 38th chapter of Genesis ; in which we have a long story about a prostitute, named Tamer ; with some indelicate remarks ; which, although they are of a piece with many other portions of this *immaculate* book, I feel myself called on, by a regard for decency, to avoid reading.

Those who can find in the lascivious Songs of Solomon, food for the gratification of what they call a *spiritual* taste, may, perhaps, discover some exquisite beauties—some highly refined sentiments—or, in the cant of fanaticism, some *type* of Christ and his church in this narration of Jewish wantonness—But I confess that, in my carnal eyes, it appears utterly unworthy of a god of purity, and, if found in any other book than the bible, would cause it to be rejected with contempt and abhorrence. Yet, we are told that this deity, this Almighty being, whom the priests represent as infinitely perfect and beyond the comprehension of mortals, so far degraded himself as to become the author of a work containing so many obscene passages that it cannot be perused by the creatures he has made, and for whose use it was specially intended, without raising a blush on the cheek of innocence.

The Christians have established societies in various parts of the world for suppressing vice, by putting down what they call blasphemous, and indecent publications. Under this pretence, the publishers of the works of Paine and of Palmer have been fined and imprisoned in England; and even in this free country, where no legal obstruction exists as to publishing works of that description, it has been attempted to affix a stigma on all who engage in this business, as if they were violators of some moral principle, or disturbers of public tranquillity. So far, however, from those liberal publications being in any way injurious to good morals, I have no hesitation in saying that there is more vulgar and coarse language—more scurrility and ribaldry—more gross indecency and blasphemy, in one chapter of the “holy book,” than is to be found in all the liberal or deistical works extant.

Were the societies or individuals who profess to aim at the suppression of vice really actuated by that motive, the first book they would lay their hands on is the bible; than which there is not a more indecent, lascivious, immoral, or pernicious book in the world. But the pretence of these men is a mere shuffle by which to violate the rights of one portion of the community, without awakening the jealousy of the other. All their projects of putting down vice, have originated with the priesthood, for the purpose of supporting their craft. The priests are the life and soul of all the societies; although they have a few weak-headed laymen numbered amongst them. They are associations of knaves and simpletons: the object of the knaves is apparent: the simpletons act without any object, and have been, not inaptly, compared to the clown who applauds the profession of legerdemain merely to promote the success of the trickery of his employer. The priest and the conjuror are both knaves; and their trades flourish only where the people are ignorant enough to be duped. Superior cunning is their only superiority; and the increasing knowledge of the age their greatest bane, and must eventually be their total annihilation.

It has been frequently regretted, that internal evidence, or that which always accompanies the promulgation of the laws of Nature, does not make a deeper and more lasting impression on the human mind. Dreams, incoherent stories, and extravagancies of every kind, are listened to with a zeal and avidity destructive of all correct operations of intellect, and subversive of the foundations of moral certainty. Historic details, even when wild and extravagant, have something in them fascinating. Those who are unaccustomed to philosophic reflection, are easily induced to yield a ready attention to the narratives of marvellous and wonderful events; and in proportion to the times and places when and where such things are said to have happened, are removed at a distance, they seem to assume a sacredness of character, and are covered with the inviolable gloss of antiquity. Such is the fact as to the story of Joseph. It is a compound of the marvellous, the simple, the sympathetic and the deceptive. It has been read in the Christian world with universal applause; but it has never been analyzed, or its true character exposed.

Joseph, it seems, who was an excellent dreamer, and a still more excellent interpreter of dreams, had offended his brethren, for which they conspired against his life; but afterwards rescinded their resolution, and sold him to a travelling company of Ishmaelites, who again disposed of him to the Egyptians. This Jewish slave, merely by the conjuring art of in-

interpreting dreams, raised himself to a state of affluence, power, and splendour under Pharaoh, then king of the country. The lascivious desires, and intriguing conduct of Potiphar's wife, had prepared for the hitherto ill-fated Joseph, scenes of fresh difficulty. His non-compliance with her amorous solicitations, had created in her bosom the sentiments of revenge. Joseph was thrown into prison; from which, however, his dream interpreting skill procured an enlargement. From this moment he became the rallying point of credulous fools; and the magicians of the country were shorn, in a great measure, of their magical glory.

Dreaming appears to have been much in vogue in those days, and the interpretation of dreams a matter of vast importance. Pharaoh, like other foolish dreamers, wished to have his dreams interpreted. Joseph was called on for this purpose, and the royal dream was stated in this manner; "And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed; and behold, he stood by the river. And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine, and fat fleshed; and they fed in a meadow. And, behold, seven other kine came up after them, out of the river, ill favoured and lean fleshed; and stood by the other kine, upon the brink of the river. And the ill-favoured and the lean fleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat fleshed kine; so Pharaoh awoke." This is one dream. After this, the king took a nap, and dreamed again in a similar manner about seven full ears of corn, &c.—These dreams were explained by Joseph to mean seven years of plenty, and seven years of famine. According to this interpretation Joseph set about monopolizing the produce of the country, and of preparing a scene of speculation, and of despotic influence, which terminated in extorting from the Egyptians all their money and cattle; and then followed the loss of their personal liberty.

All this (observes Palmer) may be said to have been wise and benevolent in Joseph; because without this arrangement the people must all have perished. If, however, he was inspired by his God with a foreknowledge of this wonderful long famine, would it not have been more honourable to him and the Deity whom he adored to have abstained from cruelty and extortion? But this Jewish God had ways of working peculiar to himself, the propriety and justice of which reason will never be able to discover. Faith however can swallow down every thing, and some people imagine that the more absurd the thing believed is, the more merit there is in believing. Both the manner and the matter of this strange story of Joseph, stamp the whole translation with fiction or with falsehood. How can the dreams of an Egyptian monarch even if interpreted by a Jewish slave, be considered as divine revelation? Dreams are but an imperfect operation of the mind, wild, disordered, and full of absurdity; yet they are made means of communication between heaven and earth, and one half of the revelations of the world rest upon this baseless and miserable foundation. If God intended to reveal himself at all to man, he would employ some better method than that of a half sleeping and half waking imagination. As to the business of interpreting dreams, it is a mere conjuring trade; nothing but the most stupid credulity could inspire any confidence in the interpreter's skill.

Towards the close of Genesis, we have the famous prophecy about the coming of Shiloh, which the ingenuity of Christian interpreters has converted into a prediction of the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth. According

to the translation now in use, the words are : "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Some translate this passage thus : "the authority shall for ever be in Judah, when the Messiah comes."—Others have it—"the authority shall be in Judah, till the messenger receive in Shiloh the sovereign power." There are some who render the passage in this manner—"the people of Judah shall be in affliction till the messenger of the Lord comes to put an end to it ;" and according to others "till the city of Shiloh be destroyed."

Which of these interpretations ought to be adopted as the true one, it is manifestly impossible to say. From one of them, it would seem that the word *Shiloh* meant a city: from another, that it was the name of a man. But supposing that it was intended to signify a man, it remains to be proved that this man was Jesus of Nazareth, who, amidst all the names given him by his superstitious votaries, never appears to have been designated by that of *Shiloh*.

That this pretended prophecy had no reference to the founder of Christianity, is also evident from another circumstance. "The sceptre (says the text) was not to *depart* from Judah until Shiloh came." Now the sceptre had departed from Judah centuries before the period when Jesus is said to have appeared on earth. Even taking their own history to be true, the sovereign power was annihilated by the Babylonish captivity, and never has been restored since. The attempt, therefore, to make this obscure passage a prophecy of the coming of a Messiah, and that that Messiah was Jesus of Nazareth, is ridiculous and absurd.

The book of Exodus commences with accusing the king of Egypt of exercising oppression and cruelty on the Israelites, who, according to the representations of the writer, had now become so numerous as to cause considerable alarm in the mind of Pharaoh for his crown and dignity. To allay his fears, he could think of no other plan than to prevent an increase of the Jewish males by ordering the midwives, when a man-child was born, to put it to death. This barbarous order it would appear was disregarded by these women ; and the reason assigned in the text is, that they saved the men children alive because they feared the Lord ; whereas the more probable reason is, if we can permit ourselves to believe any part of the story, that their natural feelings would not permit them to imbrue their hands in the blood of innocent unoffending children. In the 21st verse of the 1st chapter it is said, "And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he (that is God,) made them houses."—This was a very paltry reward for the humanity they had shown in braving the orders of a king so powerful as Pharaoh must have been. Methinks they were entitled to some higher mark of distinction, particularly as Jehovah the giver is represented as having been extremely bountiful to all who stood in awe of, or feared him. But be this as it may, it is evident that the kindness of God to the midwives in making them houses—an interposition of divine favour of which Pharaoh could not be ignorant, had no other effect on that monarch than to cause him to renew the decree of extermination : "And Pharaoh charged all his people saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive."

The story of the Jewish Lawgiver having been rescued from this untimely death by the interposition of Pharaoh's daughter, must be familiar to you all. I shall, therefore, not detain you by a perusal of it, but proceed to an examination of the narrative as it relates to the subsequent adventures of the meek and murdering Moses, who is so highly extolled, by Jewish as well as Christian writers, as the intimate friend and companion of God.

It will be recollected that in a former part of this inquiry, I spoke of Moses as altogether an imaginary being, whose adventures as related in the bible, bore a striking resemblance to those of Bacchus, as we find them detailed in the writings of the orientals; in fact, that Moses was no other than one of the constellations, invented by the Chaldeans, or some other nation more remote, from whom they borrowed it, and which was afterwards personified, for the purpose of imposing, in the dark ages, on the credulity of the multitude. As I have had no reason to view the subject in any other light since I expressed this opinion, it will be readily perceived that any remarks in which I may be supposed to recognise the actual existence of such a person as Moses, are merely hypothetical, and made for the sake of illustration, that we may be able, on their own showing, to exhibit this pretended legislator in the light in which he is represented in writings respected both by Jews and Christians.

Progress of Liberal Opinions.—In laying the following letters before our readers, we are confident they will participate with us in the pleasure we feel at the undeniable evidence which these letters afford of the rapid advancement of correct principles; and that while we are zealously endeavoring, in this city, to break down the strong hold of superstition, we are not without co-operators, in other parts of the Union, who are as ardently and as devotedly engaged in the same glorious cause. With such auxiliaries, who can doubt of success?—Let their example be followed by only a tenth part of those who entertain similar sentiments, and before another year goes round, the priesthood will have little to boast of in this mentally enslaved country.

Germantown, April 1st, 1828.

Mr. Editor—I received the numbers of the *Correspondent* for which I had written to you, and feel thankful that you have sent all that were published of Vol. 3d. I am very much pleased with the appearance as well as the matter they contain.—Liberal principles are gaining ground very fast in my neighbourhood. Ten years ago I was the only person in the place who dared openly to deny a future state of rewards and punishments, and the divinity of Christ. I was then looked upon as a very dangerous person, notwithstanding my moral character, against which nothing could be said. I was assailed on all sides, both by the clergy and laymen. I was frequently called an Infidel and a heretic: after which I read "Volney's Ruins" a book that created in me a thirst after truth and knowledge. I now wished to get a peep into Paine's works. After a great deal of enquiry, I found a man who had them, but would not lend them unless I promised to lock them up when I was not reading them. Having perused them, I prevailed on him to sell them to me. Within the last three years, I lent Volney and Paine to a number of my neighbours, who now begin to think

for themselves, instead of paying the clergy to think for them ; and I have to bear all the blame for "leading so many astray," as the clergy and their priest-ridden followers are pleased to term it.

In addition to the above books, we have among us *Ecce Homo*, the *Spiritual Mustard Pot*, *Palmer's Principles of Nature*, *Christianity Unveiled*, the *New Harmony Gazette*, and the *Correspondent*, all of which we freely lend to our neighbours. I can now as openly avow the principles contained in these works, as I could the doctrine of universalism ten years ago—and I do not hesitate in doing it—It is to be regretted that so many who in private conversation find so much fault with the clergy, have not moral courage openly to protest against them, or rather against their proceedings of draining the poor and ignorant of their money. G. H.

Mr. George Houston,

Buffalo, 7th April, 1828.

Dear Sir—I have been travelling almost every day since the first of December, which I offer as an apology for not having attended to my subscription to the *Correspondent*. We are starting a periodical at Lockport "*Priestcraft Exposed*", and another at Rochester being a revival of "*Plain Truth*". I have been some time engaged preparing a dose for the begging society Bible, Missionary, Tract, Pious Youth, &c &c. ten in number, which I intend to have printed at Rochester in one of the newspapers, and then have *Three Thousand* extra copies in a handbill form to be sent to every house in all the principal villages between this and Utica.

A meeting was held here some time ago in relation to a piety line of boats and stages, at which I attended. It was left for me to speechify on our side of the question, and the result was, that not a cent was subscribed and nothing done that could raise a hope of their ever succeeding. The agents who came from Rochester, on their return, published in their pious papers, that after the good people had come together at Buffalo "*Satan also came among them.*" The person pointed at could not be mistaken, and so I take it upon myself to give them a lesson that may induce them to let me alone in future. The brick Presbyterian church here is in a ferment, and a quarrel with their priest. They are \$10,000 in debt, and their congregation lessening daily. I threaten them, that if the church is sold under the Sheriff, I will (if I am able) purchase it for a steam mill, and stick a high pressure steam engine into it, that shall blow out the steam at the top of the steeple, so as to be heard at Niagara falls. I take a sort of *Christian* care and oversight of the State of Ohio, bordering on the Lake, from Pennsylvania to Michigan, and have the satisfaction to know, that there is but one Gospel Mill in successful operation on the whole route, and that is at Euclid, in the country, ten miles from Cleveland; the miller gets but \$200 per annum, so that you can guess what kind of preaching they get. I will send you some of my "*Exploders*" as soon as printed.

You may have inferred from my long silence that I have been lukewarm in the cause; but this is not the case, and had you been over the ground that I have travelled, you would think I have been a faithful shepherd. It is amusing for me to look back and contrast the ill treatment I have received days past, with the kindness and civility with which I am now treated by all classes, gentle and simple. Their kind treatment, only inflames my desires to be useful, and to pour out upon them the full measure of that light which circumstances have bestowed upon me.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Hindoo Bards.—A “Bhat” or bard, came to ask a gratuity. The Bhats are a sacred order all through Rajapootana. Their race was especially created by Mahadue, for the purpose of guarding his sacred bull ; but they lost this honourable office through their cowardice. The god had a pet lion also ; and as the favourite animals were kept in the same apartment, the bull was eaten almost every day, in spite of all the noise which the Bhats could make ; greatly to the grief of Siva, and to the increase, since he had to create a new bull in the room of every one which fell a victim to the ferocity of his companion. Under these circumstances, the deity formed a new race of men, the Charuns, but more courageous than the Bhats, and made them the wardens of his menagerie. The Bhats, however, still retain their functions of singing the praises of gods and heroes : and, as the hereditary guardians of history and pedigree, are held in higher estimation than even the Brahmins themselves among the haughty and fierce nobles of Rajapootana. In the yet wilder districts to the south-west the more warlike Charuns, however, take their place in popular reverence. A few years back it was usual for merchants or travellers going through Malwah and Guzerat, to hire a Charun to protect them ; and the sanctity of his name was generally sufficient. If robbers appeared, he stepped forward, waving his long white garments, and denouncing, in verse, infamy and disgrace on all those who injure travellers under the protection of the holy minstrels of Siva. If this failed, he stabbed himself with his dagger generally in the arm, declaring that his blood was on their heads ; that if all failed, he was bound in honour to stab himself to the heart, a catastrophe of which there was little danger, since the violent death of such a person was enough to devote the whole land to barrenness, and all who occasioned it to an everlasting abode in Padalon. The Bhats protect nobody ; but to kill or beat one of them would be regarded as very disgraceful and ill-omened ; and presuming on this immunity which it confers, they are said often to extort money from their wealthy neighbours by promises of spreading their great name, and threats of making them infamous and even of blasting their prospects. A wealthy merchant in Indore, some years since, had a quarrel with one of these men, who made a clay image which he called after the merchant’s name, and daily in the bazaar, and in the different temples addressed it with bitter and reproachful language, intermixed with all the frightful curses which an angry poet could invent. There was no redress ; and the merchant, though a man of great power and influence at court, was advised to bribe him into silence ; this he refused to do, and the matter went on several months, till a number of the merchant’s friends subscribed a considerable sum, of which, with much submission and joined hands, they entreated the Bhat to accept. “Alas !” was his answer, “why was not this done before ? Had I been conciliated in time, your friend might yet have prospered. But now, though I shall be silent henceforth, I have said too much against him ; and when did the imprecations of a bard, so long persisted in, fall to the ground unaccomplished ?” The merchant, as it happened, was really overtaken by some severe calamities ; and the popular faith in the powers of the minstrel cha-

racter is now more than ever confirmed.—*Bishop Heber's Narrative of a Journal through the Upper provinces of India.*

St. Blase.—Ribadeneira relates, that St. Blase lived in a cave, whither wild beasts came daily to visit him, and be cured by him; “and if it happened that they came while he was at prayer, they did not interrupt him, but waited till he had ended, and never departed without his benediction. He was discovered in his retirement, imprisoned, and cured a youth who had a fish-bone stuck in his throat by praying.” Ribadeneira further says that *Ætius*, an ancient Greek physician, gave the following

Recipe for a stoppage in the throat:

“Hold the diseased party by the throat, and pronounce these words:—*Blase, the martyr and servant of Jesus Christ, commands thee to pass up or down!*”

The same Jesuit relates, that St. Blase was scourged, and seven holy women anointed themselves with his blood; whereupon their flesh was combed with iron combs, their wounds ran nothing but milk, their flesh was whiter than snow, angels came visibly and healed their wounds as fast as they were made; and they were put into the fire, which would not consume them; wherefore they were ordered to be beheaded, and were beheaded accordingly. Then St. Blase was ordered to be drowned in the lake; but he walked on the water, sat down on it in the middle, and invited the infidels to a sitting; whereupon threescore and eight, who tried the experiment, were drowned, and St. Blase walked back to be beheaded.

The “Golden Legend” says, that a wolf having run away with a woman’s swine, she prayed St. Blase that she might have her swine again, and St. Blase promised her, with a smile, she should, and the wolf brought the swine back; then she slew it, and offered the head and the feet, with some bread and a candle, to St. Blase. “And he thanked God, and ate thereof; and he said to her, that every yere she sholde offre in his chirche a candell. And she dyd all her lyf, and sho had moche grete prosperyte. And knowe thou that to the, and to all them that so shal do, shal well happen to them.”

It is observed in a note on Brand, that the candles offered to St. Blase were said to be good for the tooth-ache, and for diseased cattle.

Abbot.—This word *abbas* in Latin and Greek, *abba* in Chaldee and Syriac,—came from from the Hebrew *ab*, meaning *father*. The Jewish doctors took this title through pride; therefore Jesus said to his disciples, “Call no one your father upon the earth, for one is your father who is in heaven.” Although St. Jerome was much enraged against the monks of his time, who, in spite of the command, gave or received the title of *abbot*, the sixth council of Paris decided, that if abbots are spiritual fathers and beget spiritual sons for the Lord, it is with reason that they are called abbots.

According to this decree, if any one deserved this appellation, it belonged most assuredly to St. Benedict, who, in the year 529, founded on mount Cassino in the kingdom of Naples, that society so eminent for wisdom and discretion, and so grave in their speech and in their style. These are the

terms used by Pope St. Gregory, who does not fail to mention the singular privilege which it pleased God to grant to this holy founder—that all Benedictines who die on Mount Cassino are saved. It is not, then, surprising that these monks reckon sixteen thousand canonized saints of their order. The Benedictine sisters even assert, that they are warned of their approaching dissolution by some nocturnal noise, which they call *the knocks of St. Benedict*.

It may be supposed that this holy Abbot did not forget himself when begging the salvation of his disciples. Accordingly, on the 21st of March, 543, the eve of Passion-Sunday, which was the day of his death, two monks, one of them in the monastery, the other at a distance from it, had the same vision. They saw a long road covered with carpets, and lighted by an infinite number of torches, extending eastward from the monastery to heaven. A venerable personage appeared, and asked them for whom this road was made? They said, they did not know. It is that, rejoined he, by which Benedict, the well beloved of God, has ascended into heaven. An order in which salvation was so well secured, soon extended itself into other states, whose sovereigns allowed themselves to be persuaded that, to be sure of a place in Paradise, it was only necessary to make themselves a friend in it, and that by donations to the churches they might atone for the most crying injustice and the most enormous crimes.

Charles Martel.—This great captain was damned, body and soul, for having rewarded his captains by giving them abbeys. A holy bishop of Lyons, named Eucher, being at prayer, had the following vision : he thought that he was led by an angel into hell, where he saw Charles Martel, who, the angel informed him, had been condemned to everlasting flames by the saints whose churches he had despoiled. St. Eucher wrote an account of this revelation to Boniface, bishop of Mayence, and to Fulrad, grand-chaplain to Pepin le-bref, praying them to open the tomb of Charles Martel and see if his body was there. The tomb was opened ; the interior of it bore marks of fire, but nothing was found in it except a great serpent which issued forth with a cloud of offensive smoke.

St. Paul the first Hermit.—The life of St. Paul, the first hermit, is said, by Butler, to have been written by St. Jerome in 365, who received an account of it from St. Anthony and others. According to him, when twenty-two years old, St. Paul fled from the persecution of Decius to a cavern, near which grew a palm-tree that supplied him with leaves for clothing, and fruit for food, till he was forty-three years of age ; after which he was daily fed by a raven till he was ninety, and then died. St. Anthony, in his old age, being tempted by vanity, imagined himself the first hermit till the contrary was revealed to him in a dream, wherefore, the next morning, he set out in search of St. Paul. “St. Jerome relates from his authors,” says Butler, “that he met a centaur, or creature, not with the nature and properties, but with something of the mixt shape of man and horse ; and that this monster, or phantom of the devil, [St. Jerome pretends not to determine which it was,] upon his making the sign of the cross, fled away, after pointing out the way to the saint. Our author (St Jerome) adds, that St. Anthony soon after met a satyr who gave him to understand that he was an inhabitant of those deserts, and one of the sort whom the deluded

genfiles adored for gods." Ribadeneira describes this satyr as with withered nostrils, two little horns on his forehead, and the feet of a goat. After two days' search, St. Anthony found St. Paul, and a raven brought a loaf, whereupon they took their coporal refectation. The next morning, St. Paul told him he was going to die, and bid him fetch a cloak given to St. Anthony by St. Athanasius, and wrap his body in it. St. Anthony then knew that St. Paul must have been informed of the cloak by revelation, and went forth from the desert to fetch it; but before his return St. Paul had died, and St. Anthony found two lions digging his grave with their claws, wherein he buried St. Paul, first wrapping him in St. Athanasius's cloak, and preserving, as a great treasure, St. Paul's garment, made of palm tree leaves stitched together. How St. Jerome, in his conclusion of St. Paul's life, praises this garment, may be seen in Ribadeneira.

Arguments proving that the Christian Religion ruins all those States where it is the Established Religion.

Abridged from a work translated from the French, and first published in 1698.

Continued from page 208.

ARTICLE VIII. Relates to the ridiculous festivals that they observe, wherein the poor idolatrous people lose their time; besides the debaucheries which this abuse indispensably occasions in Christian countries; which, together, cannot be reckoned at less than 50,000,000 of livres loss per annum. For, supposing that the industry of the nation might have been formerly valued at above 600,000,000 per annum; supposing, too, there are above fifty working days lost in a year by festivals in general, without reckoning Sundays and some other remarkable festivals, that would be the sixth part of the people's industry lost, which amounts to 100,000,000 per annum. We must also take notice, that, besides these general festivals and holy days, there are many particular festivals, viz.—those of every parish, which has its particular saint, whose image the people adore, according to the doctrine of their councils; the festivals of saints for every profession, trade, and distemper; the festivals of beasts, or saints that are patrons of beasts; so that there is much above the sixth part of the people's time lost. I confess that the time of these holy days is not absolutely lost; for the people attend to housekeeping, dress victuals, and take care of their cattle on Sunday, &c., and some other profitable things are done, as travelling by land and sea; and mariners are employed on those days, as well as others. But then, if we consider that these holy days debauch the people, teach them bad habits of idleness, drunkenness, and immodesty, which hinder them from working on other days, ruin their families, occasion abundance of disorders, quarrels, diseases, fires, and the deaths of many people, one may easily perceive that the damage occasioned by these festivals amounts to above one hundred million per annum. Masters suffer very much by this libertinism of their servants and apprentices; and some poor wives at home are grieved to consider that their husbands are at the public-house, spending all that they had gained in several days, and will come home drunk, and perhaps beat them into the bargain.

"If it be pretended that men work the better, and are the more vigorous the days after the festival, because they have had some rest,—that may be true as to some people; but for the greatest part, it hath a contrary effect,—

their idleness and debauchery make them lose those and many others ; and if all of them do not debauch themselves on those days, they spend them, at least, in races and unprofitable walks, which fatigue them more than their ordinary works ; and to those who are of a regular temper, these holy days are perfectly irksome. I am really of opinion, that the disorders above-mentioned, which are the result of, or inseparably annexed to, those festivals, do almost as much mischief as the holy-days themselves ; and experience shews us daily that there is more insolence and disorder committed on one holy-day than on three others, by the ill habits which they contract. Most masters of shops in town complain that they cannot find journeymen to work on the day which succeeds a holy-day ; nay, nor on Mondays, because of the Sunday preceding ; the rabble usually disordering themselves so much on those holy-days, that they cannot work the day after. I take no notice here of the disorders and debaucheries that are committed at their midnight masses.

To this I may join their loss of time in their scandalous pilgrimages[†], it being known that sometimes they go as far as Rome, and Loretto, and St. James de Compostella, in Spain, &c. and now and then as far as Jerusalem. Besides, they lose abundance of time in shrifting or confessing themselves, and at their anniversary-days, Ash-Wednesday, &c. and by carrying their pretended sacrament, or God, about every day, by four persons at a time, besides the priest who holds it in his hands ; and this is, perhaps, in fifty places at once in some great cities. They lose also abundance of time in their daily masses, which are said without any shadow of necessity, but merely to subsist the Pope's troops in those countries under his influence, at the charge of the people. They have, moreover, the private masses for the cure of their cattle, at which every one who is interested is obliged to assist. They lose abundance of time at all these follies, of which I might make an article apart, also their Ambarvalia and Rogation Week, (which they have borrowed from the Pagans, as they have done most of the rest of their religion,) by which they think to procure rain, or divert boisterous seasons, which might injure their corn. And this loss of time is so much the more ruinous to France, that there are abundance of more people in it unfit for work, proportionably, than in England, viz. lawyers, and other civil officers, with useless and ignorant *clergymen*, &c.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—A scientific lecture will be delivered in the Hall of the "Free Press Association," on Sunday (to-morrow) the 27th inst. at 11 o'clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, the *theological* lectures will be continued at 3 o'clock.

Removal.—The office of the Correspondent is removed to 422 Broadway, near Canal street.

. The first four numbers of the *Correspondent* being now reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 15.

NEW YORK, MAY 3, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

HUMAN HAPPINESS.

Mr. Editor—That the soul-saving, blessed church of Christ has always been *versus* the peace and happiness of man, none dare deny. To humble man in his own opinion, to sink him in the esteem of others, to vilify and depress the human character, to degrade and confuse the human mind, to sink man below the level of the brute, and render him at once despicable and miserable, has been the heavenly duty and pleasing labour of the Christian doctrine and of its inspired writers and well paid teachers and expositors ; as if throwing mud and dirt on a fine painting were the best method of showing the beauties of the piece and enhancing its value. Hence we shall claim something like novelty in only endeavouring to restore mankind to their place in existence.

We need not enquire, neither need we explain, why designing, impudent impostors first begin to deceive and to humble by terrifying man. Their success exceeded their most sanguine expectations, and mankind need no revelation to develop the iniquity of their mystery. Notwithstanding their learning, cunning, for wisdom they have none, their eighteen hundred years preaching, their lo ! here, and lo ! there, their wonders, sights, miracles, and prayer, we know nothing beyond Nature. Happiness depending on man himself, he requires only a proper education, a due attention to himself, his social and moral duties, a strict adherence to truth, with penetration to foresee, and resolution to shun whatever may militate against his peace and honour. The great Fingal, Ossian's father, and the hero of his truly original poems, gives an advice to his grandson, Oscar, which is worthy a place in any treatise on ethics. "My son," says the sage warrior : "My son, never seek danger, nor shun it when it comes ; be discreet, but be valiant in battle." Courage is by no means to be neglected in ethics. Man being a defenceless animal is naturally timid and fearful. Courage is chiefly an artificial quality of the mind, and requires training and stimulus to bring it to perfection. As much of our happiness depends on it, we should appreciate courage as a good ; and modest but firm demeanor will ever be indicative of its presence. All our modern writers, who, by the bye, have generally been dogmatic divinos, have endeavoured to disrate courage, as well became them, and to banish the article *happiness* from society. The moral slang of the dogmatist has been, that there is no such thing as real happiness on earth ; that it is not intended for us here : this world is only a temporary place of probation ; we must never think of happiness until we die ; and courage with them is a most dreadful eye sore. Hence, when they see three or four people practically belying their doctrine, the shrewd sage divine never fails to put them in mind of death, judgment, hell and eternity. He does not barely insinuate ; he tells them in plain language, that they will

be damned eternally for being merry and contented! Strange! unaccountable perversion of good, reason, and the blessings of industry and social habits!

That there is good and evil in the world, is evident. That the good is so much alloyed with evil, is the fault of the priest and his wicked doctrine. Now the duty of man is to acquire as much of the good as he can, and to guard against and shun the evil: and when unforeseen or unavoidable misfortune comes, fortitude will teach him to bear up against it. Sense, reason and knowledge will instruct him to combat and vanquish the enemy of his peace; but no prayer, no reliance on supernatural agency will relieve his distress or ameliorate his condition. I confess that this is almost impossible, according to our present divine and civil laws, which are rather calculated to plunge a man into evil, than to assist him to gain a good.—No man, in the present state of things, has at all times the means of extricating himself from misery, nor of procuring a particle of happiness. Before man's felicity can depend on himself, a great change must take place, and his knowledge must be considerably extended. To effect this, is our first duty; and let us boldly assert, in the face of the hypocritical priest and his degrading, enslaving and soul-saving church and doctrine, that human happiness, which he decries; that earthly happiness, to a point of perfection, is attainable; and that there is no other happiness for man but what he obtains in this world by the virtues of truth, knowledge, and integrity.

Much has been said about man: much more remains to be said. He must be brought forward into a more favourable light than any in which he has yet been exhibited. No "naturally prone to vice, and born to misery, as the sparks fly upward," will do: I say no! he is born as much to virtue and happiness as weight descends downwards, or as light pervades space; and he is defrauded of his birthright by lying, depraved, selfish priests. The man of general knowledge and good intentions, resting on the pivot of his own understanding, and viewing the universe above, beneath, and around him, is a being of infinite sublimity, compared with whatever we can see of material reality in life, or can conceive of spiritual existences. He measures distances impassable, calculates points in the immensity of boundless space, and moves on to infinity in rational conjectures. He weighs the elements in the mass; he estimates the magnitude, solidity, and gravity of worlds; ascertains the velocity and properties of light; arrests the winged thunder, careering through the arch of expansion, and with indescribable powers, corrects even the errors of Nature herself. This is the being whom ignorant, stupid knaves speak of as born in sin, clothed in vice, of a nature too corrupt for worms to feed on, incapable of any thing, himself, walking in darkness, unworthy of mercy, and only fit for the kingdom of heaven after being well washed in the blood of a lamb, and having capacity for faith sufficient to swallow a whale with Jonah in it.

That man is capable of happiness, and calculated to obtain it in a superlative degree, needs no logical proving: it is demonstrated every where in common life; and that he might acquire a greater share of felicity than actually falls to his lot, is also evident. But the soul-savers cannot afford it. Their watch word is, "beware of pleasure; chastise your body for the good of your precious soul; deny yourselves the comforts and blessings of life, that you may enjoy with the greater zest the transcendent blisses of the

saints in paradise. Might they not say with more propriety, torment yourselves without ceasing in this world that ye may not regret leaving it, and that the punishments of hell may not appear new and strange to you when plunged into the gulf of boiling brimstone? However, happiness is not altogether denied to exist, although fanatics cavil about its quantity and quality; and as man is highly capable of both happiness and misery, to acquire and improve the first, to circumvent and destroy the latter, is our duty.

What would make us all happy demands a larger consideration, and as we cannot exactly define what would constitute general happiness, we shall, at least, prove where happiness is not, and record what is incompatible with it. In the first place, it never can be found combined with poverty and ignorance. It never can exist in a state of slavery and dependence. It never can find a resting place under despotic legal tyranny. It never can be found among men who have more to fear of evil than to hope for of good. It flies a country where a small number of men are exalted into lords, rioting in a superabundance extorted from the labour of the residue reduced to a degraded state of slavery and starvation. It never can find footing in a country over-run with superstitions, dogmas, religious sects, absurd, unmeaning, subtle creeds, stupid preachers of enslaving doctrines, divine teachers of incomprehensible nothings, existing every where, unfelt, unseen, unknown, and undefinable by every body. Happiness is excluded by taxes to pay men for bewildering our senses with immaculate conceptions, resurrections from the dead, a kingdom of heaven, to reward knaves, fools, fanatics and impostors, and a hell to punish good, moral sensible men, who will not believe the ravings of such saints as Hohenloe, Johannah Southcote and Richard Brothers, and who dare to think. Where vice triumphs over virtue, and honesty is in continual dread of falling a prey to detestable knavery, happiness cannot exist. Where men, for only differing in opinion from others, are in danger of being destroyed by rapacious bigots; their families turned out of doors destitute, to exist on chance or become a burthen to their friends, there can be no happiness. These circumstances are indicative of a state where neither public nor private happiness can find a refuge. The negative of these circumstances would certainly produce a superior degree of felicity to any thing ever exhibited or described.

Let us look back on the state and condition of man for these three or four thousand years past, as gathered from the annals of the sage historian, the works of the gentle poet, and the ebullitions of the severe and fiery satirist. From these, we shall endeavour to learn what period of time seems most pregnant with human felicity or practical good. The virtues of courage, hospitality, generosity, love of country, fearlessness of danger and death, constancy in friendship and love, seem to have generally existed, in an eminent degree of perfection, in ancient Greece and Rome: and where these are found and encouraged, human happiness must be a general and constant companion. Whether the ancient Pagan, or Heathen or modern Christian world was most favourable to man's social enjoyments or happiness, is a question to which I come with the necessary requisites of candour and impartiality. For I am not one of those who think that all the virtues existed in ancient days only to shame modern times. Nor yet that the moderns are so good as they ought to be, considering the various lessons taught them by sad experience. Nor yet so bad as it is possible that

the sordid principles of religion may make them. No, I am of opinion, that the human intellect was and is the same always. The works of ancient and modern writers prove this. That we have improved in knowledge is certain. That we have not benefited by experience is the fault of religion. And Christianity has much to answer for on this point. For making good men bad, and bad men worse; for keeping back the growth of mind and teaching unhappiness, it stands unrivalled even by the Koran itself. Though, indeed, the mischievous tenets of Mahomedanism are only emanations from the virtues of Christianity. Whether I can make this plain to others, I know not, and care as little; but I feel fully convinced of the truth of it myself, and it appears to me that no man of information can doubt it. Ancient History, though distorted by Christian translators and vile monkish commentators, vouches for a nobleness of sentiment and sublimity of morals, which we look for in vain in the modern world. Their religion, though absurd enough in some of its ceremonies, never degraded man: its principle was to promote happiness: hence feasting, sports, reciting poems, plays, athletic games, feats of strength and activity constituted its body, though the beginning and conclusion commenced and ended with prayer, as head and tail, or prologue and epilogue, to the performance. Their morals taught man to respect himself; to bow to no tyrant; to submit to no imposition; and if he could not live in freedom, he could at least die with the approbation of his fellow-citizens; whilst to live on in slavery and disgrace rendered him despicable.

PHILO.

THE INDIAN'S LETTER.—NO V.

Friend of my bosom, let us leave the Deity to rest under the shadow of his impenetrable secret! All research concerning him and the soul's immortality ends in gloomy doubts and vain conjectures. Let us, therefore, argue and reason about what we know; where we can decide without doubting, and draw conclusions from experience and example. Let us expose to the detestation of mankind, the follies, errors, and crimes of infatuated hypocrites, whose superstition, bigotry, cruelty, and perseverance, in courses of flagrant injustice and oppression, render their name a bye-word; for the cruelty of a priest is become proverbial; his pride, avarice, and duplicity are incontestible marks of his character, and these are in numberless instances heightened by cringing baseness, depraved morals and unutterable bestiality. Their means of injuring society are manifold. Their weapons, the Bible and Testament—the holy and sacred scriptures. The poor man lies naked and defenceless before them, and their usurped power and authority is nearly equal to that of the omnipotent idol which they create, adore, and profane. Religion is their profession, and they say it is for the benefit of man. Let us then, as it is, if not *of* man, at least, *for* him, examine this divine benefit, and see how and how much it contributes to our happiness. Let us come to this question with candour and calmness, and go through the investigation with Indian integrity; keeping truth before our eyes and justice on our right hand.

The three great leaders of the known sects of religions of the present day, are Moses, Jesus, and Mahomed. To these, we might add Zoroaster, Bramah and Foh. All these people, Jesus excepted, have produced books, which their priests say are the word of God. Each of them ho-

nours all the rest with the epithets of impostor, infidel, deceiver, blasphemer, &c. and vouches for his own word of God being the only true one. If we decide in favour of any of these books, which were evidently written for the purpose of abetting impostors to deceive, enslave, and impose on mankind; if *better* can be where all are extremely bad, we would give a decided preference to the book of the Arabian prophet. And candour must allow that it is an approved abridgment of the Jewish Bible and Christian Testament. But it does not appear, that either the daring Arab, or his assistant, Sergius, the apostate monk, were any way acquainted with the Zend-Avesta. As the chimera of the egg is neglected, the Mosaic Cosmogony adopted, the contending powers of light and darkness dispensed with, Ismael and Hagar the Abraham and Sarah of the devout mussulman, and predestination and fatalism the perfection of their religious and civil code. Zoroaster's *summum-bonum*, had they known it, would have been had in requisition in some shape or other; for all religion, and all priest-craft, is contained in the space of a few lines, and forms the peroration to the divine Persian's miraculous code. Listen to the preceptory exhortation of the holy Zoroaster. After recapitulating his precepts, rules and orders he continues: After all these things, still the way to obtain happiness eternal is to sow a field of corn, plant a tree, and get a woman with child; but, performing all these is useless, unless you pay the priest his due!!! Well said, Zoroaster.

But leaving all these absurd religions, false creeds, foolish superstitions, and ridiculous ceremonies out of the case, let us examine the *pure* Christian doctrine, where no falsehood invades, no absurdity appears, no vain, unintelligible cant is found; where every thing is true that the priest says; where charity is unbounded, and the remission of sins, the unalienable property of every true believer in the faith. There a man has something to brag of. A child may be born in sin, brought up in sin, and sin on for sixty or seventy years; he may wallow on through a long life in every vice and wickedness that his frail and foul nature can aid him to accomplish; yet washing in the blood of the lamb makes him as white as snow. Curious effect of lamb's blood? This is not strange we know; blood is a fine thing for taking out stains! This, I suppose, is the reason we have so many reprobate old Christians: as they have bargained for a wash in the lamb's blood, they may wade on through the puddle of guilt as they like, being confident of a purification at a moment's warning.

Nobody will pretend to say, that the Christian doctrine exceeds all others in absurdity; for here, in this hard working country, they excuse many thousand men from all other duty to preach up the truth and simplicity of the Christian doctrine, and pay them annually *twenty million of dollars* for performing this service! These are strong and convincing arguments in favour of Christianity. But they have others far more powerful. They tell you if you do not believe every word the priest says, and all that is printed in his book, that you will be damned to all eternity; and if you pretend to reason or dispute the point with the priests, who are often dull, stupid, proud bigots, they will accuse you of blasphemy, and use all their influence to effect your ruin. This, indeed, if transacted in Turkey, in Persia, in China, or any where else but in this land of freedom, the classic ground of liberty, the glory of the world and envy of surrounding nations,

would be deemed the grand climax of despotic oppression and injustice ; but here it is all fair and right. I have in a former letter, given you an outline of this immaculate religion : what I have not done there I shall here attempt.

It is a common rule with all jugglers to leave off performing and quit the place, as soon as the secret of their art is discovered, or the nature of their tricks understood. The people are no longer pleased ; for their pleasure lay in the deception ; and he who was thought to be a magician or great necromancer, is found out to be but an ignorant clown, whose whole art, importance, and merit, lay in an impudent, staring countenance, and a few monkey like slight of hand tricks. This is the case with all the legerdemain gangs, except the staunch sons of the church. The juggling priests persist in performing, after the audience are satiated, and continue to play off their stale tricks when most of the spectators are their superiors in the science. The reason is plain ; they are paid for preaching whether the audience attend or not. One day in seven, in honour of their God, they declare war against their devil ; and with long grave faces, in loud and audible voices, repeat a regular set of prayers, sing a set of unmeaning songs, and read a dull, dry lecture, of which nobody recollects a word after he is out of the church door, and which in general, has no application to any thing in human life. This they call performing divine service. Thus they devoutly acknowledge God, one day in seven, and duly and truly serve the devil all the rest of the week.

I have, in this letter, said, that they cry up the purity and simplicity of the Christian doctrine. As to its being pure, I do not know what they mean by *pure* in this sense ; but as to simple, their religion is any thing but *simple*. The word *simple* means any thing plain, natural, easy to be perceived or understood ; any thing seen at first sight, and comprehended with ease by any capacity. It may admit of elegance, judgment, and refined taste ; be familiar yet pleasing ; common yet chaste ; and though on a level with all capacities, yet above improvement. Such is my definition of the article simplicity. Now, if the Christian creed agrees with this, I am satisfied that the religion is simple. But so different in the case, that the Cretan Labyrinth was a strait passage compared to it, and the romances of Bayardo, Ariosto and the Arabian Tales, more easy of belief than the sacred canons of the Christian church. "I believe (says the apparently devout priest) in one God, never made, who is nothing, yet is three Gods ; who made this world six thousand years ago, and two thousand years after destroyed it and all things in it, except eight persons, being one family, and a pair of all other animals, in a ship called an ark ; that two thousand years after, this triatic God begot himself over again into a son on another man's wife, who was a virgin ; that this son who was God himself, had himself put to death to appease the wrath of his vengeful father, who was himself ; that he was crucified, dead and buried, that he descended into hell ; that he rose again, and ascended into heaven, where he sitteth at the right hand of God the father, who is himself ; that he has been coming again for 1800 years, and will come at or about two thousand years from the time of his nativity, to judge the quick and the dead ; that he will take a few up to heaven, of whom I am one, and that he will send all the rest to hell for ever and ever. I believe in the resurrection of this my body, in

propria persona, and that I shall hold conversation with saints and angels through eternity." This is quite simple, you see; is equally pure, and I congratulate him who has powers of belief equal to the task of believing it. The vile impostors, the Mahomedans, will not believe this, and they will be all damned for rejecting such a pure, simple doctrine.

But the pleasantest part is to hear the Christian doctors disputing gravely about the truth, and true meaning of scripture passages. One maintaining that God means this, and the other that he means that by his divine precepts, till they grow into a holy rage and reciprocally damn each other to hell for want of faith and understanding. Hence they are divided into numerous sects, all of which devoutly consign each other to the devil and the wrath of God for ever! From these schisms, we are taught to despise their tenets; to dispute their authority, and to conclude the whole to be a bungling fabrication. It is worth observation how ready, alert, and keen the Christian priests are in detecting the frauds, impostors, and errors of all other religions but their own. They often display great learning, and sometimes science, in bringing to light the dark shades of paganism; in decrying the superstitions of poor unlearned uncivilized Indians. They shew themselves profound when arguing with African Negroes, and scolding the great god Mumbo Jumbo; Jaggernaut falls before them, and even our Kitchimanitoe hides himself in his pure blue sky from their reach. They explain all the fraudulent mysteries of the ancient oracles, and shew, that Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars were bad men and worse kings; that Apollo was the sun, Hercules strength, Minerva wisdom, Juno the air, Cynthia the moon. They prove that the Oaks of Dodona were perforated, and the deceitful lying old priests spake out of them in double meaning, or no meaning verses; that the Druids were a set of ignorant impostors, at once the accusers, judges, and executioners of the people whom they deceived, abused, and blind-folded—granting them life and property just as they pleased. How singular it is that they see all other errors, yet are blind to their own! Were they not the most stupid, or the most vile sots in existence, they must see their own downfall at hand, and endeavour by prudence, to make it easy. But no; they must fall fighting, and the sooner they are overthrown the better.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 3, 1828.

LECTURES DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible,
By the Secretary.

LECTURE XIV. (Continued from page 223.)

From the 2d chapter of Exodus, it appears that Moses, who by way of distinction is called "a servant of the Lord," commenced the career of his earthly glory by committing a deliberate murder—that he endeavoured to conceal the atrocious deed—and that he was, at last, obliged to fly to save his life. The words of the text are: "And he spied an Egyptian, smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren, and he looked this way and that way; and when he saw there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand."

If this had been the only murder of which Moses was guilty, his character would have descended to posterity much less stained with blood, enormity, and crime, than it has done. As we proceed in our investigation, we shall find it savage, cruel, and ferocious. We shall find that he was the perpetrator of deeds which the most blood-thirsty tyrant has never exceeded.

Some will, perhaps, contend that Moses was justifiable in taking the part of his countryman against the Egyptian, because the latter was smiting the former. But there are no circumstances in the case to warrant an opinion that the contest between the two was any thing more than an ordinary fight, or that Moses was actuated by any other feeling than resentment. This presumption is supported by the manner in which Moses conducted himself. The account states that he looked this way, and that way, to see if there were any witnesses near, who could afterwards testify against him; and when he ascertained that there was no person in view, he fell on the Egyptian and slew him. His guilt is still farther confirmed by his burying him in the sand after he was dead. If the action was righteous, why all these precautions against detection? If it was unrighteous, why did he commit it? Perhaps believers will say, it was at the command of God, seeing they can point out other cases in which God is said to have given commands to Moses, still more wicked and abominable. If the God of the Jews ever issued such mandates, then the God of the Jews is not the God of Nature: he is an abandoned being no better than Moses himself.

In the 3d chapter of Exodus, Moses is introduced to our notice as acting in the capacity of a shepherd to his father-in-law Jethro. While watching his flock he is said to have witnessed a most extraordinary sight—a bush in flames without being consumed. “And the *Angel* of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and behold the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses! And he said, here am I. And he said draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

Here is a strange confusion of ideas:—first, it is the *Angel* of the Lord that takes his seat in this flaming position—then it appears to be Lord himself. This is similar to the story of Jacob wrestling all night with an angel, whom he discovered to be Jehovah in *propria persona*. Do these inspired writers admit of no difference between angels, and the personage whom they call the Supreme Creator and governor of the Universe? It seems not; and, of course, their views must be very limited as to the perfections of their deity.

But Moses marches up to this burning bush to ascertain why it was not consumed, when it appeared that Jehovah himself was there, and called out for the Legislator. Moses having responded received the mandate of the Most High, which consists in a solemn injunction that the former should pull off his shoes, because the ground on which he stood was holy! A very important command; a sublime revelation, indeed, that God should seat himself in a flaming bush for the useless and senseless purpose of telling a man to pull off his shoes!

In the last verse of this chapter, we find Jehovah directing his chosen people to rob the Egyptians of their property under the specious pretence of *borrowing*.

"Every woman (says the text) shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians." How far such proceedings and directions are consistent with the principles of immutable justice, I leave it to the Christians themselves to explain.

In the 7th chapter of Exodus, verse 3d, God is represented as saying, "And I will *harden* Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt." Now, of what good was it to multiply these signs and wonders, when the same power by which they were wrought, was exerted in hardening Pharaoh's heart in such a manner that the wonders could not produce any effect? It was, in fact, making God the author of all the crimes resulting from such hardness; it was charging the wicked actions of man on a being of the utmost purity and perfection. It is astonishing that those friends of revealed religion, who pretend to be the only true friends of God, and who also believe that God is a friend to none but themselves, should set up a system of morality, with external purity proclaimed on the face of the record, while every thing essentially contained in this system places deity in a state of acrimonious hostility against morals, truth, and philosophy. The authors of the first five books of the bible have created a monster—formed on the model of their own passions—partaking of their own vices—enlisted in their own quarrels—and no better than themselves.

It is impossible for any man to examine with attention this book, and not perceive in the character of the Jewish God, numerous and glaring imperfections—and, in many cases, the most complete and absolute impotence. The chosen people of Jehovah were under the tyranny of the Egyptian king. Moses and his God united their strength and ingenuity for the emancipation of this favoured race. But Pharaoh opposed their designs; and having his heart often hardened, either by the God of the Jews, or from his own choice, he seemed to triumph over the numerous efforts which the chosen band made to effect their escape! Is it not extraordinary that any one can be so stupidly ignorant of that being who is believed to have called the Universe into existence, as to imagine that the God of the Jews is a real, and not a fictitious being. What are all the kings and tyrants of the world when placed in the balance of Supreme Wisdom, and the infinite perfections of Deity? Superstition may play off her delusive tricks on mankind, and triumph a little longer amidst prevailing ignorance—But the period rapidly approaches, when the conjurations of the imaginary Moses, and the scandalous descriptions of his God, will be prostrated before the throne of Reason, and remain for ever in a state of silence and contempt.

The 8th chapter of Exodus opens with an extraordinary account of frogs, which were sent by Jehovah to invade the Egyptian king, and infest the habitations of his subjects. The account is as follows:—"And if thou refuse to let my people go, behold I will unite all thy borders with frogs. And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly, which shall go up and come into thine house, and into thy bed-chamber, and upon thy bed, and into the

house of thy servants, and upon thy people, and into thine ovens, and into thy kneeding troughs." This is one effort of the Jewish divinity to frighten Pharaoh into his duty. But it did not answer the purpose: the Egyptian king remained inflexible and obstinate in holding the "chosen favourites" in bondage. We may well ask why God sent such a vast number of frogs when he knew it would promote no useful purpose? Is it consistent with infinite wisdom to employ those means only to accomplish his purposes which must necessarily produce a failure? This frog miracle, said to have been performed by Aaron through the assistance of God, was imitated and equalled by the magicians of the country, for they also brought up frogs. It is rather singular that Jehovah should be placed in competition with a set of Egyptian conjurors, and that the latter should, in so many instances, exhibit their miraculous operations in a manner equal to the Jewish God himself.

When this wonderful miracle of the frogs had passed away, it seems that Pharaoh relapsed into a state of hard-heartedness for which he was so remarkable. But is it any way surprising that this monarch should have been so hardened, when God himself undertook to, and actually did render his moral sensibility obdurate?

The next brilliant effort of Jehovah, for the emancipation of his chosen people, is the manufacturing of a greater number of *lice* than ever was heard of in any other part of the world, or in all the world beside. It is said (verse 16 and 17) that "all the dust of the land became lice throughout all the land of Egypt!" Can such an extravagant, foolish, uninteresting story be considered as a divine revelation? Such representations ought to be held in contempt by all who have any regard for correct principles. But here, it is said, by believers, the power of God was manifest, as the magicians failed in their efforts to bring forth lice. This, however, was evidently owing to the want of materials out of which to make them; for Aaron and the Jewish conjurors had used all the dust of the land in their lousy manufactory. But, even laying this aside, and taking the account as it stands, it can only be said that Aaron was the most dextrous juggler, and played off a better game of deception than his competitors.

In the 4th chapter of Exodus, we find Moses about to commence his career of "conjuring glory"—in which, however, notwithstanding the assistance of Jehovah, he does not appear to triumph much over the profane conjurors of antiquity; while some of modern times have certainly surpassed him. If Moses were here now with his rod and his serpent, I am certain it would be no difficult matter to find more than one individual, who, without any pretensions to divine assistance, would bear the laurel away from him. I myself have witnessed tricks of deception, and I dare say, many of you have also been eye witnesses of them, that appeared as wonderful and extraordinary as those said to have been exhibited by Moses; but which, *when explained*, had nothing remarkable in them; the success of the performance being altogether owing to the dexterity, or superior slight of hand of the exhibitor.

If then, men of the present day can perform as great wonders as those attributed to Moses, and these too by human art and ingenuity, why should a supernatural power be resorted to for the purpose of extricating the Jewish conjuror from his difficulties? Those who are such strenuous advocates

for miracles, and believe that they form an undeniable proof in favour of the divinity of the scriptures, ought first to compare the two kinds of conjurors—those who pretend to be divine, and those who operate by mere human ingenuity—To bring a full fledged bird out of a fresh egg, is as great a miracle as to turn a rod into a serpent; yet the former has been witnessed—at least to the view of the audience such appeared to be the fact.—If the enlightened people of this age and country can be thus deceived, why should we form any better opinion of the Hebrews, and the Egyptians? They were not so well informed—they were more superstitious; and, of course were subject to greater impositions than we are.

There is a circumstance mentioned in the 24th verse of this chapter which is really laughable, and which, of itself, is sufficient to overthrow the pretended divinity of the whole system—God is said to have met Moses at a tavern; and from the manner in which the story is told, we must conclude that they had a serious quarrel together. The words are these—“And it came pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him.” Now the word *sought*, implies efforts without success. Whether the Lord chased Moses up and down through the several rooms of the tavern, or that Moses was an even match for the Lord, is what I shall not pretend to say. But one thing seems very plain, that such a degrading scandalous description of the character and conduct of deity, must subvert the supposed truth and divinity of any book whatever—Is the opinion entertained by Christians no more exalted than to imagine that their God frequents taverns or public places, with a design to kill some one of the creatures of his power, when, if he choose, he could crush the whole to atoms in a single moment? Such is the fact in the present case. Let those who reverence the bible, and despise reason, read this story and blush, if they can blush at any thing, for having so long prostituted their faculties as to give credit to such a mass of romances.

New York Observer.—Our readers will recollect that in our number for 29th December last, we detected the religious paper, published in this city, called the *New York Observer*, in promulgating a malicious fabrication respecting the “Free Press Association,” and called on the conductors of that pious journal to give up the name of the author of this calumny of which, if they refused, we should regard them as the sole inventors. Instead of justifying their pretensions to impartiality, by furnishing the name of the traducer, the *Observer*, evidently smarting under the odium of having been so clearly detected in a falsehood, has ever since been actively engaged in pouring out the most acrimonious ebullitions on all who profess liberal principles, and particularly on that body against which it commenced its unprovoked, unbounded, and unjustifiable vituperations. Aware that these paroxysms proceeded from *ignorance*, and accustomed to be denounced by the unmeaning appellations of Atheists, Infidels, enemies to God, and children of the devil, the furious attacks of the writers in the *Observer* excited no other feelings in our breast than compassion for these benighted individuals, and a more earnest desire to dissipate the errors with which their minds are imbued, and which alone have been the cause of their entertaining so unfounded ideas of our objects, and such uncharitable views as to our future destiny.

With antagonists who estimate *truth* as paramount to all other considerations; who esteem it honorable to retract an error when it is fairly pointed out to them, we shall always be found ready to enter the lists. But when men wanton in calumny and abuse—when they substitute terms of reproach—terms used for no other purpose than to enlist the worst passions of humanity—for fair, temperate argument;—with such men it would be a waste of time, and an insult to the understandings of rational men, to attempt to carry on a contest. If, however, the conductors of the *New York Observer*, or of any other religious journal, who tread in its footsteps, will return to *first principles*, and consent to investigate, coolly and calmly, the *truth* of their system—the *evidence*, which, they pretend to say, establishes its divine origin—we shall readily join issue with them in the enquiry; for it is of no use to agitate discussion as to parts of a system, when the *entire system itself is liable to be disputed*. The advocates of Christianity always take it for granted, that there once existed a person of the name of Jesus of Nazareth; and that the history of him in the new testament books is an authentic history, emanating from God himself. Now both these propositions we consider unfounded, and are prepared to offer such reasons for our incredulity as, we feel confident, will convince any man whose mind is freed from the prejudices of education, and properly estimates the value of evidence, that the assertions of our opponents, even at this late hour, are not entitled to all the credit that they wish. If it is true that, about eighteen hundred years ago, there was actually in being a person answering the description given of him in the gospel, it is an easy matter for those who maintain this to *prove* the fact. But if they shrink from the investigation, and load those with abuse who entertain doubts on the subject, they virtually acknowledge the badness of their cause.

Progress of Liberal Principles.—We have been favoured with the perusal of a few numbers of a new periodical work, commenced in January last in London, by Mr. Richard Carlile, entitled "*The Lion*," by which we rejoice to learn that liberal principles are advancing with a rapidity in Great Britain that defies all the attempts of fanaticism to impede. The following extract, which we give as a specimen of the work, we recommend to the careful perusal of the conductors of the *New York Observer*. If, after this, they again assert that "the race of these men is short lived," we shall be at no loss to appreciate their true motives:

RELIGIOUS CONFESSIONS OF THE ANGLO SCOTCH PRESBYTERY.

A long, very long, pastoral letter has been printed and dispersed by this Presbytery, with an apparent mixture of desire and hopelessness of reaching and recalling the dispersed baptized of the kirk, residing in and about London. It is stated, with much of priestly and religious affliction, that, though the number of Scotch residents, who, as infants, and not knowing right from wrong, were baptized in the kirk, be one hundred thousand; now, having reached manhood, not one thousand, not one in a hundred, continue their communications with the kirk! It is further explained, by way of contrast, that, within the memory of some of the "*reverend fathers of the presbytery*," the Scotch residents of London have increased four-fold, and that the Scotch churches and the attendants on those churches have

diminished by more than a half; thus stating the increase of the number of Scotch Infidels in London within fifty years, as eight, nine, or ten to one. Care is taken to state, that these strayers from the fold have not strayed into other religious folds; but that they have strayed away from all religious folds! The reverend Robert Taylor, who stands like the one lost or strayed sheep from the Episcopal Clergy of the Church of England, cracks his joke upon this lamentation of the Scotch Presbytery, and says, that they have lost the ninety-nine out of the hundred, and have with difficulty kept the one in the fold! They had better now let out the remaining one, and turn the kirk or fold to some more useful and more agreeable purpose.

To the honour of infidelity, the confession and lamentation of the Presbytery, states, that all this straying of the Scotch from Auld Kirk is solely attributable to their intellectual improvement: that their religion flourished best with their ignorance; but that as they become men of letters, arts, sciences, and political economy, they abandon religion, and religious institutions! We thank the Anglo-Scotch Presbytery for this confession, and we admire its frankness, its truth, and its honesty. That such is the real bearing of the case, is well known to us infidels, and such must become the final and universal admission of all the churches.

In the face of this confession of the Presbytery, that their religion is not well founded, since it has flourished only among ignorant men, and since it is by their own showing, rejected by men of talent, by all who study the arts and sciences, by all who study literature and political economy, how can they call it their duty to put forth this pastoral admonition and complaint? Or if it be a religious duty, can it be also an honest duty? After such a damning fact admitted, that all that are respectable in talent of the Scottish nation, have thrown aside the religion of their more ignorant fathers, what hope can this Presbytery have, what honesty, what reward can be expected, in thus proclaiming and complaining of the failure of the Kirk? Is it to be preserved, because it is two hundred years old? Then give us the Roman Catholic Christian, or the Pagan religion, with its higher pretensions to antiquity. Why persist in preaching an absurd fable to those who know it to be a fable, and, of whom, it is admitted, that they reject it, because it is a fable? because they have acquired knowledge enough to know that it is not well founded? Are the profits of error, thus to continue to arraign the honesty and the improvement of mankind? Are priests, useless, mischievous priests, thus to continue to prey upon any small portion of the human race, which, like spiders with their webs to entrap a fly, they can entrap and entangle in their meshes and senseless mysteries? No! It cannot be much longer so. And this confession of the Anglo-Scotch Presbytery is but the prelude to a general admission of the Christian priests, that their posts are no longer tenable.

MISCELLANEOUS.

St. Macarius.—Alban Butler says he was a confectioner of Alexandria, who, in the flower of his age, spent upwards of sixty years in the deserts

in labour, penance, and contemplation. "Our saint," says Butler, "happened one day inadvertently to kill a gnat, that was biting him in his cell; reflecting that he had lost the opportunity of suffering that mortification, he hastened from his cell for the marshes of Scete, which abound with great flies, whose stings pierce even wild boars. There he continued six months, exposed to those ravaging insects; and to such a degree was his whole body disfigured by them, with sores and swellings, that when he returned he was only to be known by his voice." The Golden Legend relates of him, that he took a dead Pagan out of his sepulchre, and put him under his head for a pillow; whereupon certain devils came to affright the saint, and called the dead Pagan to go with them; but the body under the saint said he could not, because a pilgrim lay upon him, so that he could not move; then Macarius, nothing afraid, beat the body with his fist, and told him to go if he would, which caused the devils to declare that Macarius had vanquished them. Another time the devil came with a great scythe on his shoulder, to smite the saint, but he could not prevail against him, on account of his virtues. Macarius, at another time being tempted, filled a sack with stones, and bore it many journeys through the desert. Seeing a devil before him in the shape of a man, dressed like "a herawde," with his clothing full of holes, and in every hole a phial, he demanded of this devil whither he went; and why he had so many phials? The devil answered to give drink to the hermits; and that the phials contained a variety of liquors, that they might have a choice, and so fall into temptation. On the devil's return, the saint inquired how he had sped; and the devil answered very evil, for they were so holy that only one Theodistus would drink; on this information Macarius found Theodistus under the influences of the phial, and recovered him. Macarius found the head of a Pagan, and asked where the soul of its body was: in hell, said the head: he asked the head if hell was deep;—the head said deeper than from heaven to earth: he demanded again, if there were any there lower than his own soul—the head said the Jews were lower than he was: the saint inquired if there were any lower than the Jews—the head answered, the false Christian-men were lower than the Jews, and more tormented: there the dialogue between the saint and the head appears to have ended. Macarius seems, by the Golden Legend, to have been much annoyed by the devil. In a nine days' journey through a desert, at the end of every mile he set up a reed in the earth, to mark his track against he returned; but the devil pulled them all up, made a bundle of them, and placed them at Macarius's head, while he lay asleep, so that the saint with great difficulty found his way home again.

Adoration.—Is it not a great fault in some modern languages, that the same word which is used in addressing the Supreme Being, is also used in addressing a mistress? We not unfrequently go from hearing a sermon, in which the preacher has talked of nothing but *adoring* God in spirit and in truth, to the theatre, where nothing is to be heard but the *charming object of my adoration*, &c. The Greeks and Romans, at least did not fall into this extravagance. Horace does not say that he *adores* Lalage; Tibullus does not *adore* Delia; nor is even the term *adoration* to be found in Patro-nius. If any thing can excuse this, it is the frequent mention which is made in our operas and songs of the gods of ancient fable. Poets have said that

their mistresses were more adorable than these false divinities ; for which no one can blame them. We have insensibly become familiarized with this mode of expression, until at last, without any perception of the folly, the God of the universe is addressed in the same terms as an opera-singer.

Singing.—Throughout the East, songs, dances, and torches, formed part of the ceremonies essential in all sacred feasts. No sacerdotal institution existed among the Greeks without songs and dances. The Hebrews borrowed this custom from their neighbours ; for David *sung and danced before the ark*. St. Matthew speaks of a canticle sung by Jesus, and by his apostles, after their passover. This canticle, which is not admitted into the authorized books, is to be found in fragments in the 237th letter of St. Augustin to Bishop Chretius ; and, whatever disputes there may have been about its authenticity, it is certain that singing was employed in all religious ceremonies. Mahomed found this a settled mode of worship among the Arabs ; it is also established in India ; but it does not appear to be in use among the lettered men of China.

Adam.—The pious Madame de Bourinon was sure that Adam was an hermaphrodite, like the first men of the divine Plato. God had revealed a great secret to her ; but as I have not had the same revelation, I shall say nothing of the matter. The Jewish Rabbis have read Adam's books, and know the names of his preceptor and his second wife ; but as I have not read our first parent's books, I shall remain silent. Some acute and very learned persons are quite astonished when they read the *Veidam* of the ancient Brahmins, to find that the first man was created in India, and called *Adimo*, which signifies *the begetter*, and his wife *Procriti*, signifying *life*. They say that the sect of the Brahmins is incontestably more ancient than that of the Jews ; that it was not until a late period that the Jews could write in the Canaanitish language, since it was not until late that they established themselves in the little country of Canaan. They say that the Indians were always inventors, and the Jews always imitators ; the Indians always ingenious, and the Jews always rude. They say it is very hard to believe that Adam, who was fair and had hair on his head, was father to the Negroes, who are entirely black, and have black wool. What, indeed, do they not say ?

Origin of Evil.—It is as difficult to know at what time the Book of Genesis which speaks, of Adam, was written, as it is to know the date of the *Veidam*, of the Shanscrit, or any other of the ancient Asiatic books. It is important to remark, that the Jews were not permitted to read the first chapter of Genesis before they were twenty-five years old. Many rabbis have regarded the formation of Adam and Eve and their adventure as an allegory. Every celebrated nation of antiquity has imagined some similar one ; and by a singular coincidence, which marks the weakness of our nature, all have endeavoured to explain the origin of moral and physical evil by ideas nearly alike. The Chaldeans, the Indians, the Persians, and the Egyptians, have accounted, in similar ways, for that mixture of good and evil which seems to be a necessary appendage to our globe.

Arguments proving that the Christian Religion ruins all those States where it is the Established Religion.

Abridged from a work translated from the French, and first published in 1698.

Continued from page 224.

ARTICLE IX. Relates to the sums which the Pope, being a foreign power, draws from France every year, under different denominations, as—annates, bulls, dispensations, indulgencies, relics, provisions, *Agnus Dei*, and consecrations of prelates, dedications of churches, jubilees now and then, both in France and at Rome, &c.; the money drained out of the kingdom by this means amounts to divers millions annually. M. de Sully, superintendent of the finances under Henry the IVth, having well examined the matter, found that, in that time, the Pope got every year, one with another, about four million of livres from France; and since that time it has, at least, doubled, but we will suppose it were only six millions of livres per annum.

ARTICLE X. Is concerning the great sums which the cardinals, protectors of France, and divers other prelates, who are pensioners of France, besides the Knights of Malta, &c. draw yearly out of the kingdom, by benefices which they possess in it. This amounts also to several millions yearly.

ARTICLE XI. Relates to the tapers, wax candles, and oil, that are spent in their foolish superstitions; as burning them before images, statues, hosts, and at funerals, &c. which formerly cost the kingdom of France, perhaps, eight or ten millions per annum; the greatest part of the wax being imported from other countries; and for that which is the product of France, it must also be reckoned, because it is as unprofitably spent as if they should take the wine and brandy, which are articles of merchandise, and pour them out upon the ground. I do not reckon here the incense, which they burn to little purpose, because that is no great matter, and it is grateful to the smell; neither do I take notice of the ornaments and raiment of their statues, images, and other idols, because they last long; nor of their mysterious vestments, adorned with fine lace, of linen, silver or gold, or gold fringes or embroidery, with which their priests are decked, like the priests of the Jews, when they perform what they call divine service. Nor do I take notice of the great quantity of wine, which is spent in their multitude of masses daily, because it nourishes those who drink it; nor yet of their wafers or consecrated hosts that they keep, though it be so much flour lost. So that I content myself here to reckon only the loss of their tapers and oil, which I do verily believe, including their loss of time in making or lighting their candles, and cleaning and lighting their lamps, amount to eight or ten millions per annum.

To be continued.

Free Press Association.—The regular monthly meeting of the “Free Press Association,” will be held in the Lecture Room on Sunday (to-morrow) the 4th inst. at 11 o’clock forenoon.

In the afternoon, a Theological Lecture will be delivered at 3 o’clock.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 16.

NEW-YORK, MAY 10, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. EDITOR—I have received of the *Correspondent*, Vol. 3, the ten first numbers by Wilmington, and the eleventh and twelfth direct. By the free admission of the hitherto repressed sentiments of all, you ensure encouragement. I think such a journal may do much, especially for the rising and future generations. The people of this vicinity are generally disposed to liberality, and among my particular friends, there is much freedom of enquiry upon moral and natural philosophy; but many of them, with respect to toleration, remind me of the bookseller, who, wishing to make a flourish, added to his half-mile catalogue, “&c. &c. &c. *ad infinitum* to a certain extent.” The less candid, or more prudent, frequently close our discussions with some qualifying remark upon the danger of speculation, or, in their view, the no less formidable danger of publicly avowing opinions at variance with long established doctrines; and I have been frequently and seriously advised by gentlemen for whom I have great respect, not to encounter, at least, any of the leading dogmas of Christianity, or subject myself to the jealousy or censure of the “sound in faith.”

Men making any profession of religion, generally shun the investigation of mysteries, which vanish “into thin air” as soon as the talisman of reason is suffered to approach. They are even smitten with “holy fear” if common sense, in his unsophisticated honesty, imagines that he has stumbled upon the clue that will make the mazes of the labyrinth so clear, that “the way-faring man, though a fool, cannot err therein.”—If you enter the field against men of this class, they will quote text after text in confirmation of what they advance, and you must at once give tacit assent to arguments of this kind, or submit to the ungracious alternative of being branded as an irreligionist, or some such thing, which they find it easier to name than define; so that we must become reputed sceptics or conscious hypocrites.

“Hypocrisy’s a damning sin,
And whoso lets the harpy in,
Wi’ a’ her unco lying din,
She will deceive him,
Till truth from her accursed grin
Can ne’er retrieve him.”

It is for the sake of untrammelled interchange of sentiment that I have subscribed for the *Herald of Heresy*; and though I may seldom trouble you with my lucubrations, I may enjoy the pleasure of perusing the unrestrained expression of the opinions of others. I imagine I may stir up one or two more to the “good work,” and influence them to give your

paper the encouragement a "free press" publication deserves. In the mean time I shall be obliged to any of your correspondents to answer the following query in candor:—

What are the reasons which induce you to believe in the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, omnipotent and omnipresent?

Yours, &c.

E. M.

NATURAL IDEAS.

MR. EDITOR—According to the principles of Christianity, poverty itself is a virtue. It is the virtue which sovereigns and priests oblige their slaves most rigorously to observe. With this idea, many pious christians of their own accord have renounced the perishable riches of the earth, distributed their patrimony among the poor, and retired into deserts, there to live in voluntary indigence. But this enthusiasm, this supernatural taste for misery was soon forced to yield to nature. The successors of these volunteers in poverty; sold to devout people their prayers and pious intercessions with the divinity; they became rich and powerful. Thus monks and solitaries lived in indolence, and under color of charity, impudently devoured the substance of the poor.

The species of poverty most esteemed by revealed religion, is *poverty of mind*. The fundamental virtue of all religion, that is, the most useful to its ministers, is *faith*. It consists in unbounded credulity, which admits without inquiry whatever the interpreters of the Deity are interested in making men believe. By the aid of this wonderful virtue, priests became the arbiters of right and wrong, of good and evil; they could easily cause the commission of crimes to advance their interest. Implicit faith has been the source of the greatest outrages that have been committed on earth. He who first taught nations, that when we wrong men we must ask pardon of God, appease him by presents, and offer him sacrifices, destroyed the true principles of morality. According to such ideas, men imagine that they may obtain of the King of Heaven, as of kings of the earth, permission to be unjust and wicked, or, at least, pardon for the evil they may commit.

Morality is founded on the relations, wants, and constant interests of the inhabitants of the earth; the relations, which subsist between God and men are either unknown or imaginary. Mortals imagine they may injure one another with impunity by making suitable satisfaction to the Almighty Being, who is supposed to have the right of remitting all offences committed against his creatures. Is any thing better calculated to encourage or burden the wicked in crimes, than to persuade them there exists an invisible being, who has a right to forgive them the acts of injustice, rapine, perfidy, and outrage that they commit against society? Encouraged by these destructive ideas, the most perverse men perpetrate the most horrid crimes, and believe they make reparation by imploring Divine mercy. Their conscience is at rest when the priest assures them that heaven is disarmed by a sincere repentance, very useless to the world. The priest consoles them in the name of the Deity if they consent to share with his ministers the fruits of their fraud and robberies, as a reparation of their faults.

If ignorance is useful to priests and oppressors of mankind, it is fatal

to society. Man, void of knowledge, does not enjoy his reason; without reason and knowledge, he is a savage, who is every instant liable to be hurried into crimes. Morality, or the science of duties, is acquired only by the study of man and his relations. He who does not reflect is unacquainted with true morality, and walks with precarious steps in the path of virtue. The less men reason, the more wicked they are. Savages, princes, nobles, and the dregs of the people are commonly the worst of men, because they reason the least.

The devout man never reflects, and is careful not to reason. He fears all inquiry, follows authority, and often, through an erroneous conscience, makes it a sacred duty to commit evil. The unbeliever reasons; he consults experience, and prefers it to prejudice. If he reasons justly, his conscience is enlightened; he finds more real motives to do good than the bigot, whose only motives are his chimeras, and who never listens to reason. Are not the motives of the unbeliever sufficiently powerful to counteract his passions? Is he blind enough to be unmindful of his true interest? If so, he will be vicious and wicked; but he will be neither worse nor better than the numerous believers, who, notwithstanding revealed religion and its sublime precepts, follow a conduct which their religion condemns. Is then a credulous assassin less to be feared than an assassin who believes nothing? Is a very devout tyrant less a tyrant than an undevout tyrant?

A religious man, notwithstanding the unsocial principles of a sanguinary religion, will sometimes be humane, tolerant, and moderate; the principles of his religion are then inconsistent with the gentleness of his character. Libertines, debauchees, hypocrites, adulterers and rogues often appear to have the best ideas on morals. Why do they not reduce them to practice? Because their temperaments, interest, and habits do not accord with their sublime theories. The rigid principles of Christian morality, which many people regard as divine, have but little influence on the conduct of those who preach them to others. Do they not daily tell us to *do what they preach, and not what they practise*?

Every man who reasons soon becomes an unbeliever: for reason shews that theology is nothing else but a tissue of chimeras; that superstition is contrary to every principle of good sense, that it tinctures all human knowledge with falsity. The sensible man is an unbeliever, because he sees that far from making men happier, superstition is the chief source of the greatest disorders, and the permanent calamities with which man is afflicted. The man who seeks his own welfare and tranquillity, examines and throws aside his superstitious ideas, because he thinks it no less troublesome than useless to spend his life in trembling before phantoms, fit to impose only on silly women, or children.

CLIO.

ORIGIN OF MAN.

MR. EDITOR—The pride of the existing generation of mankind, with their immortal souls, will not allow them to harbor the idea of the existence of animals in the sea like themselves: and notwithstanding the frequent sight of such animals, the cry of *fable* is raised. They will readily believe stories about personified Gods, Ghosts, and Devils, which no one professes to have seen, and for whose existence no rational or

probable account or theory can be given; but about the existence of such an animal as themselves in the sea, where it is notorious that all sorts of animals do exist, the spiritualists become the greatest sceptics and blasphemers. There was a clear and satisfactory attestation of a merman or woman having been seen on the coast of Ireland, a few months back. But the publication of such a fact is to the priests and their dupes one of the degrees of blasphemy. De Maillet's book leaves the matter unquestionable: and Mosheim, the author of the *Ecclesiastical History*, in referring to De Maillet's *Description of Egypt*, published at Paris in 1785, styles him *a writer of the most unquestionable authority*. His book *TELLIAMED* exhibits the utmost reverence for truth.

The one legged race, he finds amphibious, associating with the Esquimaux on the North American coasts, acting as a kind of boat man-agers. His authority is an Esquimaux Girl, that was taken and brought to Canada, where she lived as a servant to a French Lady. Some of the Esquimaux are little short of being amphibious animals; and if they rat^g as a part of mankind, we need not be ashamed to own the whole monkey race, and all that can be said about mermen and women. I should like to have asked Captain Parry, or any of his associates in the polar voyages, what he thought of the soul^g and heavenly salvation of those wretched beings which he found in his two voyages.

As it is evident, that the waters have covered and have retired from every part of the earth, it is rational to suppose, that earthquakes and other convulsions have in some places caused a very sudden retirement of the waters from some places, leaving the larger footed animals contained in them on comparatively dry land, or with so small a quantity of water about them as to render them amphibious from necessity. A new kind of atmosphere, and gradual changes assimilating them to it, might change much of the original character of these animals. Terrified at their new situation, and ignorant of every cause of it, it is likely that they would not move far from the spots in which they were left, and thus, after a time, lose their instinct as aquatic animals. If such a theory exhibits the least character of validity, it becomes a question, whether those heaps of bones which have been found in caverns, in collections so difficult to be accounted for, might not have been the bones of *sea* instead of land animals, and whether the *Mammoth* was ever really a land animal.

So much for the origin of man. It is a difficult and a delicate subject. It were fortunate for him to have kept in the water, or to have left his soul, or notion of an immortal soul there. I presume there are no sea-gods; though we have identified sea-devils! Q.

THE SAINTS.

MR. EDITOR—*The following account of the Saints is extracted from Dr. Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History:—*

In the fourth and fifth centuries of Christianity, which may justly enough be termed the age of ignorance, superstition, and corruption, all such persons who distinguished themselves from the multitude, either by their genius, their writings, or their eloquence, by their prudence and dexterity in imagining matters of importance, or by their meekness and

moderation, all such were esteemed something more than men; they were revered as Gods; or, to speak more properly, they appeared to others as men divinely inspired, and full of the Deity. (Vol. II. p. 31.)

The images of those, who, during their lives had acquired a reputation of sanctity, were honoured with a peculiar worship; and many imagined that this worship drew down into the images the propitious presence of the saints, or celestial beings they represented. A singular and irresistible efficacy was also attributed to the bones of these saints, and to the figure of the cross, in defeating the attempts of Satan, removing all sorts of calamities, and in healing, not only the diseases of the body, but also those of the mind; (vol. ii. p. 39.) and an opinion was propagated with industry, by a rapacious priesthood, among the people, that the remission of sins was to be purchased by liberalities to the churches and temples, which were dedicated to these celestial mediators. (p. 144.)

In the sixth century, many took upon themselves to write the *Lives of the Saints*. Among this kind of biographers, we find the names of Eudodius, Eugippius, Cyril, Dyonisius, Dogitosus, and others. But however pious the intentions of these biographers may have been, it must be acknowledged, that they executed the task in a most contemptible manner. No rational models of piety are to be found amongst these pretended worthies, whom they propose to Christians as objects for imitation. They amuse their readers with gigantic fables and trifling romances; the examples they exhibit are those of certain delirious fanatics, whom they call *saints*, men of corrupt and perverted judgment, who offered violence to reason and nature, by the horrors of an extravagant austerity in their own conduct, and by the severity of those singular and inhuman rules, which they prescribed to others. For the means by which these men were *sainted*, was by starving themselves with a frantic obstinacy, and bearing useless hardships of hunger, thirst, and inclement seasons, with steadfastness and perseverance; by running about the country like madmen, in tattered garments, and sometimes half naked, or shutting themselves up in a narrow space, where they continued motionless: by standing for a long time together in certain postures, with their eyes closed, in the enthusiastic expectation of divine light. All this was saint-like and glorious; and the more that any ambitious fanatic departed from the dictates of reason and common sense, and counterfeited the wild gestures, and incoherent conduct of an idiot, or a lunatic, the surer was his prospect of obtaining an eminent rank among the heroes and demi-gods of a corrupt and degenerate church. (p. 130.)

But even all this was insufficient to satisfy the demands of a superstition nourished by the stratagems of a corrupt and designing priesthood, and fomented by the zeal of the more ignorant and stupid sons of the church. It was not enough to reverence departed saints, and to confide in their intercession and succors; it was not enough to clothe them with an imaginary power of healing diseases, working miracles, and delivering from all sorts of calamities and dangers; their bones, their clothes, the apparel and furniture they had possessed during their lives, the very ground which they had touched, or in which their putrid carcasses were laid, were treated with a stupid veneration, and supposed to retain the

marvellous virtue of healing all disorders, both of body and mind; and of defending such as possessed them, against all assaults and devices of satan. (p. 323.) The consequence of this wretched notion was, that every one was eager to provide himself with these salutary remedies, for which purpose great numbers undertook fatiguing and perilous voyages, and subjected themselves to all sorts of hardships; while others made use of this delusion to accumulate their riches, and to impose upon the miserable multitude, by the most impious and shocking inventions. As the demand for relics was prodigious and universal, the clergy employed all their dexterity to satisfy these demands, and were far from being nice in the methods they used for that purpose. The bodies of the saints were sought by fasting and prayer, instituted by the priest, in order to obtain a divine answer, and an infallible direction never failed to accomplish their desires; the holy carcase was always found, and that always in consequence (as they impiously gave out) of the suggestion and inspiration of God himself. Each discovery of this kind was attended with excessive demonstrations of joy, and animated zeal of those devout seekers, to enrich the church still more and more with this new kind of treasure. Many travelled with this view into the eastern provinces, and frequented the places which Christ and his disciples had honoured with their presence, that with bones and other secret remains of the first heralds of the gospel, they might comfort dejected minds, calm trembling consciences, save sinking states and defend their inhabitants from all sorts of calamities. Nor did these pious travellers return home empty; the craft and knavery of the Greeks, found a rich prey in these stupid and credulous relic-hunters. The latter paid considerable sums for legs, and arms, skulls, jaw-bones (several of which were not even human) and other things that were supposed to have belonged to the primitive worthies of the Christian church. But there were many, who, unable to procure for themselves these spiritual treasures, by voyages and prayers, had resource to violence and theft: for all sorts of means and all sorts of attempts, in a case of this sort, were considered, when successful, as pious and acceptable to the supreme Being. (p. 324.)

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 10, 1828.

LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION,

On the Vital Principle. By the Secretary.

There is, perhaps, no subject, on which a greater difference of opinion has prevailed, than on the principle of *Vitality*. Some writers have supposed that *fire* and this principle are derived from the same source, and are of a similar nature. Others supposed it to be derived from the sun. The principle of vitality has also been considered to be a humid vapor, and that humidity was the active principle of all things. Other authors have imagined the vital energy to be the same as the soul, and derived from the air. Several modern physiologists have considered the nervous fluid as the source whence it is derived; and some have identified it with the electric and galvanic fluids; while others have concluded that life itself was nothing more than the organization or modification of matter.

To me it appears that most of the opinions prevailing on this subject are radically wrong, inasmuch as they assume the existence of a separate and substantive being, which they term *the mind*, in contradistinction to *matter*, as if man was composed of two natures, an ethereal or spiritual one, and a material one. This I hold to be an illusion. The physiology of man, and the observation of daily experience, prove him to be a *feeling*, not a thinking animal.

I had recently an opportunity of showing that what is called the faculty of *instinct* in animals, whether in men or brutes, is only the result of sensation. Although man, in point of organization, is by far the superior animal, no one can deny that among quadrupeds are frequently to be found indications of great intelligence, similar to what belongs to our species. From this I infer, that the internal formation of the brain of these animals approximates very closely to that of man. But this approximation, or resemblance, is not confined to animals. Among *vegetables* we find instances of plants possessing sensation, or feeling—others subject to irritation—and frequently manifesting that they are actuated, or moved, by motives similar to those which influence the conduct of animals. A little attention to the habits of both, will place the matter, in my opinion, beyond dispute.

That animals and vegetables have the same constitution and taste, seems to be clear from the fact, that what nourishes and supports the one, nourishes and supports the other. It is well known to botanists, that a great portion of the manure necessary to the rearing of plants, is of animal growth. Every horticulturist, by placing portions of animals at the foot of his fruit-trees, and every agriculturist, by manuring his field with ground bones, is perfectly convinced of this fact; while flourishing church-yards and smiling battle-plain bear witness to its truth. In this we discover the existence of digestive powers in plants, by which they are able, like animals, to take up and assimilate whatever is suited to their frames. It is particularly worthy of observation, that farinaceous vegetables and oviparous animals, are nourished in their tender state nearly in the same manner. The embryo plant is supported by the farino, melted down into a milky liquor, and conveyed into its body by means of an umbilical chord, at a time when the radicle is unable to supply a sufficiency of nutriment. An *oviparous* animal, from the time that it is brought into light, seems to receive all its nourishment from without; but this is in *appearance* only: the yolk of the egg, remaining entire during incubation, is received into the body of the animal, and, in a manner similar to the milky juice of the vegetable, is slowly conveyed into the vessels of the tender chick; and thus a sweet nourishment is prepared, at a time when neither the industry of the animal, nor the attention of its mother could have procured a supply. To what are we to ascribe the spontaneous *motion* observable in many plants? When in a dark situation, they lean or turn from the ordinary position of their stems, towards another situation, which affords them a freer access of light. Several plants, in the day time, turn their flowers towards the sun. Most of them, in a serene sky, expand their flowers; but before rain, shut them up, or contract them at the approach of night. The trifoliate leaves of clover, fold themselves back during night.

The leaflets of robinia, and liquorice, are pendulous at night. The leaves of *minosa pudica* fold themselves, and overlap one another; thus seemingly composed to rest after exposure to the stimuli of day-light. Linnæus calls this the sleep of plants; but it is evidently a fixed law of Nature, and not a necessary consequence of the stimulus of light acting on vegetable fibre. Many flowers only expand when the sun shines, and close their petals at night. Although many open their blossoms in the morning and close them at night, several species differ as to their hours of opening and closing. Some open their blossoms and exhale their sweet perfumes at night only. The tamarind tree is said by Alpinus and Acosta, to infold the flowers or fruit within its leaves every night, to guard them from cold or rain. Some of the sensitive plants, and one species of the wood sorrel, on being touched, roll their leaves up and turn downwards, or shrink, and after a little time, expand them again. In this they bear a striking resemblance to the spider, and some other animals, that feign death when they are apprehensive of danger from external causes. Other sensitive plants act in a very different manner. The leaves of *diancea muscipula*, close exactly like a gin, and ensnare, and commonly squeeze to death any insect which alights on its apex. A similar property has been observed in the leaves of the *drosera*, or sun dew. The stamina of the common berry, and the *stylidium glandulosum*, exhibit the same sensibility. Here then we have indications of cunning, and of hostility or revenge in plants, no less observable than those we find in animals.

The succession of the periodical opening and closing in plants, has been called the *Horologium Floræ*, or Plantary Indicator. In this character, we have numerous remarkable instances of their indicating changes in the state of the atmosphere, by the opening and shutting of their flowers. "If the Siberian sow-thistle," says Keith, "shuts at night, the ensuing day will be fine; if it opens, it will be cloudy and rainy. If the African marigold continue shut after 7 o'clock in the morning, rain is near at hand. If the *convolvus arvensis*, or *anagallis arvensis*, red pimpernel, are fully open, they will close on the approach of rain. The last of which, from its peculiar susceptibility, has obtained the name of the *Poor Man's Weather Glass*."

Several naturalists have ascertained that *heat* is evolved by some plants, which they account for by the rapid destruction of oxygen, or its combination with the vegetable carbon, especially during the time of fecundation. Others have discovered a great similarity between the *mechanism* of plants and that of animals—the parts of the former bearing some analogy to those of the latter, and the vegetable and animal economy appearing to be formed on the same model. Plants are also *propagated* in a manner similar to animals. They have *sexes*, and by the action of the pollen on the stigma, vivifying or stimulating effects are produced, as in the contact of the male and female among animals.

There are many vegetables, such as the byssus, the tremella, and the lichen, which, in common with several animals, possess the property of *revivification*. The byssus consists of an immense variety of fibres, possessing neither roots nor leaves, nor any regular structure, but shooting forth in all directions, and so strongly intermingled with each other, as

to form a compact matting; which, although it may be torn asunder, no art can disentangle. It is not only capable of propagation by the most minute fragments, however rudely detached, but in that state retains the principle of revivification for years together. If the water, in which this plant is found, be withdrawn from it, and the plant is dried so as to become shrivelled up, then broken into innumerable fragments until it appears utterly destroyed, it speedily resumes its former healthy appearance whenever the water is replaced. Another kind of vegetable production is that commonly called *mouldiness*, which is found in great profusion on certain decaying substances. This vegetable appears to be endowed with the power of propagating itself *ad infinitum*. From a single seed, one million of seeds are known to have been produced in the short space of forty-eight hours! So indestructible is the vegetative quality of these seeds, that they have been found to retain that principle, after having been experimentally exposed to a strong degree of heat, by being roasted over red hot coals.

By recent experiments, it has been ascertained, that the metallic poisons act on vegetables nearly in the same manner as they act on animals. They appear to be absorbed, and carried into the different parts of the plant, and to alter and destroy the tissue of it by their corrosive power. These poisons, and particularly those which are demonstrated to destroy animals by their action on the nervous system, produce also the death of plants. Animal matter is soonest affected by the operation of air, heat, and light. Vegetable substances yield more slowly; but finally obey the same laws.

The analogy between plants and animals is farther illustrated and confirmed on analyzing them. Murray, in his *Elements of Chemistry*, says, "There are found in the products of the vegetable kingdom, though in very different proportions, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, phosphorus, sulphur, the fixed alkalis, lime, magnesia, alumina, and silex; besides several metals, particularly iron, manganese, and, as it has likewise been affirmed, gold." On referring to the products of animal matter, it will be found that it is composed of exactly similar elements, only with the addition of a little gold and alkali; which, possibly, some day, will be discovered to exist also in plants.

Thus we see that plants are nourished by the same food that nourishes animals; that the one has digestive powers as well as the other; that they both possess motion, which is no less essential to the health and strength of the one than it is to the other; that they are both alive to danger; are cunning and revengeful; that they both foresee changes in the state of the atmosphere, and give indications of them; that they both evolve heat; that their mechanism in many parts bears a striking resemblance; that they both propagate by the intercourse of sexes; that they both possess the property of revivification; that they are acted upon in the same manner by metallic poisons; and that when chemically analyzed, they are found to contain almost the same products. Can we then deny, in the teeth of these facts, that the organization of plants indicates an existence superior to what is usually termed dead, or inert matter? Will we be so bold as to affirm, with all these proofs before us of sensitiveness and feeling, that vegetables are utterly destitute of in-

telligence? Can any reason be assigned why Nature, which has given us so many demonstrations of its astonishing wisdom and power, should not have conferred on all organized substances similar faculties? They, doubtless, differ in degree, and may not always be apparent to our limited conceptions. But this affords no ground for denying to one part a faculty which there are so many reasons for believing is common to all.

When the seed of a plant is placed in a favorable soil, and supplied with a proper quantity of heat, light, and water, it will gradually unfold itself, until it becomes similar to the parent plant. But this increase and unfolding of its vegetable character, are results completely independent of any direct parental succor; nor can we comprehend the nature of these changes by referring them to the general properties of matter. We must, therefore, seek for a solution among other principles than those which belong to matter in general. We can form a tolerable idea from the well known principles of aggregation, how many changes take place in unorganized bodies; but by what law a carnation seed, when placed in the earth, produces a group of beautiful flowers, or how a simple acorn unfolds itself, and becomes a stately oak, are questions which have never, till lately, been answered in a satisfactory manner.

Happily the invention of the microscope has opened to our view a new world of existences, and, by improvements subsequently made on its construction, a solution has been found to many results, which have hitherto been classed among the impenetrable secrets of Nature. Of these, the polype, brought to light by Trembley, in 1741, are the most remarkable. Although their reality was for some time disputed, all doubt on the subject has long ago vanished, and we have now an acknowledged race of little creatures, which can scarcely be ranked either among animals or vegetables, yet evidently partaking of the nature of both. Buffon and Needham were among the foremost who maintained that these little objects were only organized particles, from which animals are formed, and were not possessed of vitality. But since the invention of the compound microscope, facts have transpired which warrant the opinion, that even the polype are produced by an agency, whose energetic ramifications extend much farther into the animal and vegetable world.

Mr. Bywater, of Liverpool, who has for some time been engaged in extensive physiological inquiries, mentions the following experiment:—If the weather be warm, let a wine-glass, half filled with pure water, be mixed with about a tea-spoonful of flower, and then we shall find, by inspecting a small portion on a slip of glass, that the mixture is filled with linear bodies, which may be so far excited as to manifest a quick, writhing action when touched or stirred with an external body; but in a short time, if the weather continues warm, these linear bodies will have acquired such a degree of vital energy as to show that the mixture is full of them, writhing about in every direction, without being excited to action by external agents. It was by viewing an infusion of the pollen of flowers (continues Mr. Bywater) with one of Wilson's highest magnifiers, that I first observed these linear bodies, although I afterwards found, that by using the compound microscope, a more perfect view of their nature and character might be obtained. That these linear objects

are real bodies, is evident from their becoming magnified like other bodies, in proportion to the magnifying power used.

In Adams' treatise on the Microscope, an experiment is noticed by a Mr. Ellis, which fully corroborates that of Mr. Bywater. A potatoe was boiled till it was reduced to a mealy consistency. A part of it was then put into a cylindrical glass vessel, with an equal proportion of the boiling liquor. It was immediately covered close with a glass cover. Twenty-four hours afterwards, Mr. Ellis examined a small drop of this liquid by Wilson's microscope, when he plainly distinguished a vast number of objects of a linear shape, moving to and fro with great celerity. This experiment he repeatedly tried, and always found it to succeed.

But it is not by infusion merely, that the existence of this vital energy is ascertained. If we examine small portions of leaves, and the delicate parts of plants, we shall find linear bodies, exactly in appearance to those already mentioned, imbedded in every part of a leaf and flower. If a little juice be pressed out of a herbacious plant, and examined by the compound microscope, it will be found full of these linear bodies, writhing about in a very active manner.

It has long been a perplexing question in vegetable physiology, how the evident secretive processes of vegetables are carried on? Sir James Smith says, that "the agency of the *vital* principle alone can account for these wonders, though it cannot to our understandings explain them." Now it appears to me that the vital principle here alluded to, and considered so inexplicable by this great botanist, is the same energetic force, the same linear bodies, discovered by the experiments of Bywater and Ellis. May we not refer the different secretive processes, which are carried on in vegetables, to this kind of vital energy, when we find the very parts in which these secretions take place, completely filled with the secreting agents? Several collateral arguments might be adduced in favor of this system;—for instance, the *corallines* are; many of them, such beautiful vegetable imitations, that they were at one period classed by naturalists among plants; but it has since been clearly demonstrated that they are the secretive productions of a race of little animalcules, which are imbedded in their apparent leaves and branches. Nor is it by a few analogies that this reasoning is supported: the whole vegetable phenomena evidently point to a similar principle. Even the soil in which the plant grows, partakes, in a certain degree, of this peculiarity. To test this, let a little soil be mixed with a drop of water on a slip of glass, and then quickly examined by the microscope, and it will be found filled with active linear bodies, similar to those obtained from vegetables, and vegetable infusions.

In fine, the atmosphere, the surface of the earth, the waters, every part of the human body, and of the bodies of other animals, are pregnant with life. Nothing but life is to be seen in every thing, and every where. Thus science dispels the illusions of priestcraft, and points out to man his true situation in the vast universe of existences, by a correct knowledge of which alone he is able to discharge the important duties assigned to him. "If theorists (remarks an intelligent writer) were to confine themselves to nature, and divest their minds of all the prejudices of the nursery and the school-room, we should hear no more of the

soul, of a thinking spiritual being. Unshackled by the dogmas and terms of priestcraft, the philosopher would confine himself to the truths revealed by Nature. He would begin his researches into man, by tracing the gradual growth of what we term mind, in proportion to the growth of the body of the infant; a palpable demonstration of the materiality of the famous thinking substance, denominated soul. Presumptuous and selfish knaves have made God after their own image, that they might play off their own passions to the best advantage, and sell and trade vengeance and mercy, under a tariff of sin! Thus priests arose from idle impostors, and the people paid them to get rid of their own fears, and bribe an imaginary God to placability, or beneficence. The poor Hindoo makes a god of a serpent. The Egyptians worshipped the most obscene organ of our body; an abomination only one degree less intolerable than that of some of the priests of the middle ages."

MISCELLANEOUS.

St. Anthony.—According to Butler, St. Anthony was born in 251, at Coma near Heraclea in Egypt, and in that neighbourhood commenced the life of a hermit; he was continually assailed by the devil. His only food was bread with a little salt; he drank nothing but water, never ate before sunset; sometimes only once in two or four days, and lay on a rush mat or on the bare floor. For further solitude he left Coma, and hid himself in an old sepulchre, till, in 285, he withdrew into the deserts of the mountains, from whence, in 305, he descended and founded his first monastery. His under garment was sackcloth, with a white sheepskin coat and girdle. Butler says that he "was taught to apply himself to manual labor by an angel, who appeared plaiting mats of palmtree leaves, then rising to pray, and after some time sitting down again to work; and who at length said to him, 'Do this, and thou shalt be saved.' The life attributed by Butler to St. Athanasius, informs us that our saint continued in some degree to pray whilst he was at work; that he detested the Arians; that he would not speak to a heretic unless to exhort him to the true faith; and that he drove all such from his mountain, calling them venomous serpents. He was very anxious that after his decease he should not be embalmed, and being one hundred and five years old, died in 356, having bequeathed one of his sheepskins, with the coat in which he lay to St. Athanasius." So far Butler.

St. Athanasius, or rather the life of St. Anthony before alluded to, which, notwithstanding Butler's authorities, may be doubted as the product of Athanasius; but, however that may be, that memoir of St. Anthony is very particular in its account of St. Anthony's warfare with the infernal powers. It says that hostilities commenced when the saint first determined on hermitizing; "in short, the devil raised a great deal of dust in his thoughts, that by bemudding and disordering his intellects he might make St. Anthony let go his design." In his first conflict with the devil he was victorious, although Satan appeared to him in an alluring shape. Next he came in the form of a black boy, and was again defeated. After that Anthony got into a tomb and shut down the top, but

the devil found him out, and with a great company of other devils so beat and bruised him, that in the morning he was discovered by the person who brought his bread lying like a dead man on the ground; whereupon he took him up and carried him to the town church, where many of his friends sat by him until midnight. Anthony then coming to himself and seeing all asleep, caused the person who brought him thither to carry him back privately, and again got into the tomb, shutting down the tomb-top as before. Upon this, the devils being very much exasperated, one night, made a noise so dreadful, that the walls shook. "They transformed themselves into the shapes of all sorts of beasts, lions, bears, leopards, bulls, serpents, asps, scorpions and wolves; every one of which moved and acted agreeably to the creatures which they represented; the lion roaring and seeming to make towards him, the bull to butt, the serpent to creep, and the wolf to run at him, and so in short all the rest; so that Anthony was tortured and mangled by them so grievously that his bodily pain was greater than before." But, as it were laughingly, he taunted them, and the devils gnashed their teeth. This continued till the roof of his cell opened, a beam of light shot down, the devils became speechless, Anthony's pain ceased, and the roof closed again. At one time the devil laid the semblance of a large piece of plate in his way, but Anthony, perceiving the devil in the dish, chid it, and the plate disappeared. At another time he saw a quantity of real gold on the ground, and to show the devil "that he did not value money, he leaped over it as a man in a fright over a fire." Having secluded himself in an empty castle, some of his acquaintance came often to see him, but in vain; he would not let them enter, and they remained whole days and nights listening to a tumultuous rout of devils bawling and wailing within.

Blessing of Beasts.—On St. Anthony's day, the beasts at Rome are blessed, and sprinkled with holy water. Dr. Forster, in his "Perennial Calendar," remarks, that "the early Catholics regarded no beasts, birds, or fish, as hateful." He says, that "St. Anthony was particularly solicitous about animals, to which a whimsical picture by Salvator Rosa represents him as preaching; and he suggests, that "from his practices, perhaps, arose the custom of blessings passed on animals still practised at Rome; he regarded all God's creatures as worthy of protection"—except heretics, the doctor might have added; unless, indeed, which seems to have been the case, Anthony regarded them as "creatures" of the devil, between whom, and this saint, we have seen that the Rev. Alban Butler takes especial care we should not be ignorant of the miraculous conflicts just related.

Lady Morgan says, that the annual benediction of the beasts at Rome, in a church there, dedicated to St. Anthony, lasts for some days: "for not only every Roman, from the pope to the peasant, who has a horse, a mule, or an ass, sends his cattle to be blessed at St. Anthony's shrine, but all the English go with their job horses and favorite dogs; and for the small offering of a couple of *paoli*, get them sprinkled, sanctified, and placed under the protection of this saint. Coach after coach draws up, strings of mules mix with carts and barouches, horses kick, mules

are restive, and dogs snarl, while the officiating priest comes forward from his little chapel, dips a brush into a vase of holy water, sprinkles and prays over the beasts, pockets the fee, and retires."

Dr. Conyers Middleton says, that when he was at Rome, he had his own horses blest for eighteen-pence, as well to satisfy his curiosity, as to humor his coachman, who was persuaded that some mischance would befall them in the year, if they had not the benefit of the benediction.

Candlemas Day.—From catholic service-books, quoted in "Pagano Papismus," some particulars are collected concerning the blessing of the candles. Being at the altar, the priest says over them several prayers; one of which commences thus: "O Lord Jesu Christ, who enlightenest every one that cometh into the world, pour out thy benediction upon these Candles, and sanctifie them with the light of thy grace," &c. Another begins: "Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Everlasting God, who has created all things of nothing, and by the labour of bees, caused this liquor to come to the perfection of a wax candle; we humbly beseech thee, that by the invocation of thy most holy name, and by the intercession of the blessed virgin, ever a virgin, whose festivals are this day devoutly celebrated, and by the prayers of all thy saints, thou wouldst vouchsafe to bless and sanctifie these candles," &c. Then the priest sprinkles the candles thrice with holy water, saying "Sprinkle me with," &c. and perfumes them thrice with incense. One of the consecratory prayers begins: "O Lord Jesu Christ, bless this creature of wax to us thy suppliants; and infuse into it, by the virtue of the holy cross, thy heavenly benediction; that in whatsoever places it shall be lighted, or put, the devil may depart, and tremble, and fly away, with all his ministers, from those habitations, and not presume any more to disturb them," &c. There is likewise this benediction: "I bless thee, O wax, in the name of the holy trinity, that thou mayest be in every place the ejection of Satan, and subversion of all his companions," &c. During the saying of these prayers, various bowings and crossings are interjected; and when the ceremonies of consecration are over, the chiefest priest goes to the altar, and he that officiates receives a candle from him; afterwards, that priest, standing before the altar towards the people, distributes the candles, first to the priest from whom he received a candle, then to others in order, all kneeling (except bishops) and kissing the candle, and also kissing the hand of the priest who delivers it. When he begins to distribute the candles, they sing, "A light to lighten the gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." After the candles are distributed, a solemn procession is made; in which one carries a censer, another a crucifix, and the rest burning candles in their hands.

The pagans used lights in their worship, and Constantine, and other emperors, endowed churches with land and various possessions, for the maintenance of lights in catholic churches, and frequently presented the ecclesiastics with coffers full of candles and tapers. Mr. Fosbroke shows, from catholic authorities, that light-bearing on Candlemas day is an old Pagan ceremony; and from Du Cange, that it was substituted by pope Gelasius for the candles, which in February, the Roman people used to carry in the Lupercalia. Pope Innocent, in a sermon on this festival,

quoted in "Pagano Papiasmus," inquires, "Why do we (the catholics) in this feast carry candles?" And then he explains the matter, by way of answer. "Because," says he, "the gentiles dedicated the month of February to the infernal gods, and as, at the beginning of it, Pluto stole Proserpine, and her mother, Ceres, sought her in the night with lighted candles, so they, at the beginning of this month, walked about the city with lighted candles; because the holy fathers could not utterly extirpate this custom, they ordained that Christians should carry about candles in honour of the blessed virgin Mary: and thus," says the pope, "what was done before to the honour of Ceres, is now done to the honour of the Virgin."

The "Golden Legend" relates, that a lady who had given her mantle to a poor man for the love of "Our Lady," would not go to church on Candlemas-day, but went into her own private chapel, and kneeling before the altar, fell asleep, and had a miraculous vision, wherein she saw herself at church. Into this visionary church she imagined that a troop of virgins came, with a noble virgin at their head, "crowned right preciously," and seated themselves in order; then a troop of young men, who seated themselves in like order; then one, with a proper number of candles, gave to each a candle, and to the lady herself he gave a candle of wax; then came St. Laurence as a deacon, and St. Vincent as a sub-deacon, and Jesus Christ as the priest, and two angels bearing candles; then the two angels began the Introit of the mass, and the virgins sung the mass; then the virgins went and each offered the candle to the priest, and the priest waited for the lady to offer her candle; then "the glorious quene of virgyns" sent to her to say that she was not courteous to make the priest tarry so long for her, and the lady answered that the priest might go on with the mass, for she should keep her candle herself, and not offer it; and the virgin sent a second time, and the lady said she would not offer the candle; then "the quene of virgyns" said to the messenger, 'Pray her to offer the candle, and if she will not, take it from her by force;' still she would not offer the candle, and therefore the messenger seized it; but the lady held so fast and long, and the messenger drew and pulled so hard, that the candle broke, and the lady kept half. Then the lady awoke, and found the piece of candle in her hand; whereat she marvelled, and returned thanks to the glorious virgin, who had not suffered her to be without a mass on Candlemas-day, and all her life kept the piece of candle for a relic; and all they that were touched therewith were healed of their maladies and sicknesses.

Hindoo Superstition.—At Umeer, the ancient capital of Jypoor, Bishop Heber, among other sights, visited the temple. "After passing," he says, "through a dark low arch into a small court, to my surprise, the first object which met my eyes was a pool of blood on the pavement, by which a naked man stood with a bloody sword in his hand. The scenes through which we had passed were so romantic, that my fancy had almost been wound up to expect an adventure, and I felt, I confess, for an instant my hand instinctively clench more firmly a heavy Hindostan whip I had with me, the butt end of which would, as a last resource, have been no despicable weapon. The guide, however, at the same in-

stant, cautioned me against treading in the blood, and told me that a goat was sacrificed here every morning. In fact, a second glance showed me the headless body of the poor animal lying before the steps of a small shrine, apparently of Kali. The Brahmin was officiating and tinkling of his bell: but it was plain to see from the embarrassment of our guide, that we had intruded at an unlucky moment, and we, therefore, merely cast our eyes round the court, without going nearer to the altar and its mysteries. The guide told us, in our way back, that the tradition was, that, in ancient times, a man was sacrificed here every day; that the custom had been laid aside till Jye Singh had a frightful dream, in which the destroying power appeared to him, and asked him, why her image was suffered to be dry? The Rajah, afraid to disobey, and reluctant to fulfil the requisition to its ancient extent of horror, took counsel, and substituted a goat for the human victim, with which the "dark goddess of the azure flood" was graciously pleased to be contented.

The bull is an object of worship, and in most Hindoo towns of eminence you will meet with tame bulls overburdened with fat, lolling their length in the streets and highways, obstructing passengers and carriages. They are fed by the people, or rather they feed themselves, for they make no scruple of shoving their heads into whole baskets full of grain or vegetables, exposed for sale in the windows, or in open stalls; and although driven away by the waving of handkerchiefs in their faces, or by other gentle methods, yet no Hindoo of any character would think of striking one of these animals with such severity as to endanger its life, or would run the risk of maiming the sacred brute. And, ridiculous as it may sound, you may see a Hindoo driving away one of these animals from his grain-basket by hearty slaps on the face and on the back, addressing him at the same time by the respectful title of "mah-raj! mahraj!" meaning "your holiness," or "your worship!"

Priestly Barbarity.—A poor man, named Patric Bryan, lived in Haggard, Mountains of Glamore, having a miserable hovel, which he built on half an acre of ground; the land about him is let for 10s. per acre; he has been ill for a long time, and supported by the parish, having four children and a poor wife. A day or two ago, he was called upon for tithes; there were Rectoral Tithes, Corporation Tithes, and Vicarial Tithes. Having nothing to pay them, the very zealous collector took from off him the only blanket he had." But it would be well if it ended here—hear the sequel: The zealous parish priest of Slieverne, the Rev. J. Fitzpatrick, and his coadjutor, the Rev. Mr. Foran, were collecting yesterday a subscription to purchase a coffin and shroud—for what? to bury the corpse of the man who died on the night of the day that he was stripped of his blanket!!!—*Waterford Chronicle*.

Free Press Association.—The meetings of this Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 11th inst, at half past 10 o'clock forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 17.

NEW-YORK, MAY 17, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

JUSTICE OF GOD.

"Shall mortal man be more just than God?"—Job iv. part of the 17th verse.

This is a text from which I lately heard a Universalist minister in this place take his discourse, to support his doctrines against Presbyterianism & Co. He began by stating the rank and condition that mankind held in the scale of animated beings; his relation to, and dependence on God; and finally pronounced all those who deny the existence of God, not sincere. He next dwelt upon the power and universal goodness of God; observing that his relations and feelings towards us were as a parent towards his children. He concluded by noticing the general fact, that parents wish to render their children happy, and only punish them for the purpose of correcting their faults; consequently, God, as the parent of us all, does the same; and in this particular is more just than man; that all the toil and misery which we suffer, is the parental chastisement that God inflicts, to make us wiser and better; and finally, that the Bible did not contain the doctrine of election and eternal punishment. This was the substance of his discourse.

Though the doctrines of the Universalists may be a little more liberal than those of some other sects, yet like them, the preacher above alluded to, perhaps, dared not proceed to the *full* extent of his argument, and shew *all* that his God does to mankind, because it would prove too much; it would prove most conclusively that man is more just than the Christian God. The parent of a family of children ought to do all in his power to make them virtuous, and at the same time give them a sufficient education in all the necessary branches of knowledge; so that as children they may be his delight, and when grown up, the pillars and ornament of society; acting virtuous and just as they would have others do to them. And I think I may say without the fear of contradiction, that there are few parents, whether rich or poor, elevated or debased, who would not, if it depended on their *will*, educate children in this manner. Suppose mankind had always been educated under the influence of such virtuous feelings and just habits, where should we see children and parents quarrelling together? Where should we find children practising all kinds of crimes, and becoming hardened as they grow older, till they should end their days in prison, or on the gallows? If, I say, parents had the power to make the dispositions of their children, we should see nothing of all this. But God, according to the Christians, possesses this power over all mankind, who are as his children; and yet

the present condition of all mankind is evidence of this truth, *that man is more just than God.*

The earthly parent, who should know the dispositions of his children were liable to be corrupted by the temptations which surround them, would use the requisite means of protecting them from it to keep them in the paths of virtue: and would not that parent be thought unwise and unkind, who should say, "Children, I give you full liberty to conduct as you please, right or wrong. Go on to multiply crime and debase your species;—render yourselves miserable here, and perpetuate that misery from generation to generation; and when you arrive at years of maturity, I will have a lamb sacrificed as an atonement to myself for the crimes that you have committed, instead of using the power which I possess in making your conduct as it ought to have been." What earthly parents acting thus would be thought in their right mind? Mankind, the preacher says, stand in relation to God as children to parents; yet himself offers an atonement for the sins of his children, instead of curing the evils for which he is supposed to offer the atonement. The greatest benefit that mankind could receive, would be that the Christian God should exercise his power according to his supposed abilities, and exercise the same regard towards mankind that an earthly parent does with regard to his children; and till he does, *man will be more just than the God of the Christians.*

Let any man of common sense, Christian or Mahomedan, solemnly ask himself this question:—"If I had the power to possess all mankind with such a love of virtue and justice, that they would need no punishment of death, imprisonment, or penalties of any kind to render them honest, would I not do it?" The answer must be, "yes." But God, according to the Christian, possesses this power over all mankind; thus establishing the unavoidable conclusion (acknowledge it they will not) that as long as he permits them to exist in their present condition, *the earthly is more just than the heavenly parent.*

YOUNG ATTICUS.

JUDAISM.

MR. EDITOR—I consider the Bible as a compound of kingcraft, and priestcraft. The Old Testament was written by the priests, with no other view than to render the Jews submissive to themselves and to whom they might please to give the government. If we examine it we shall find this to be the case. Can it be said that Moses was a disinterested patriot? that, like Washington, he delivered his country from slavery from the purest motives, or that he delivered it from the Egyptian yoke to subject it to his own family? It was with this view that he anointed Aaron high priest over Israel. When they arrived at the promised land, it was divided among eleven tribes only; the tribe of Levi was not to work for their living, they were not to cultivate the soil; they were to be supported in idleness by the people; they were to be at the head of the government; they were to make and depose judges, rulers, and kings. It was calculated to, and had the effect of reducing the people to abject submission. If they failed for a moment to obey their priests, the most terrible judgments were threatened them; not only the people

but even kings stood in awe of them ; for if a king failed to follow their directions, he was sure to be deposed, if not slain. To support them, the people were taxed one seventh part of their time, and one tenth part of their substance. Besides new moons, solemn feasts, passovers, jubilees, &c. and innumerable sacrifices, sin offerings, peace offerings, and wave offerings, the first-born of man and beast, and the first fruits of the earth were to be dedicated to the Lord, or in other words, given to the priests. Moses, when he wrote the first chapter of Genesis, had no other end in view than the establishment of the fourth commandment. The fourth commandment says, "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day ; six days shalt thou labor and do all that thou hast to do, but the seventh is the sabbath of the Lord thy God : in it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gate ; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day ; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it." To pass over the absurdity of the Almighty's being tired and resting himself, and being so thankful for rest that he hallowed the day on which he rested, the day on which he rested was not the seventh day ; for the sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies were not created until the third or fourth day. We all know that day and night is caused by the rising and setting of the sun ; and I cannot conceive how there could be day or night before the sun, moon, and the heavenly bodies were created.

It cannot be said that the Jews enjoyed happiness as a nation, for no sooner had they ceased destroying the nations around them, than they turned their arms against one another. Their history presents but little else than a series of wars, rebellions, treasons and massacres. The system is not only dangerous to the political happiness of any nation who may adopt it as a standard of right and wrong, but it is dangerous to the morals of private persons ; for can a believer do better than to imitate the conduct of those favorites of the Deity who went to heaven as soon as they died ? For instance, Lot : he was such a righteous man that the Lord sent two angels to remove him from a city which he intended to destroy : and yet Lot offered to prostitute his two virgin daughters to a mob, and afterwards committed incest with them. Elijah was an inspired man, and yet he bathed his hands in the blood of some hundreds of his fellow prophets. Samuel was another inspired man, and yet he hewed a fellow being to pieces in cold blood. David, that holy usurper, who is represented as the peculiar favorite of Jehovah, ordered a young man who had put himself into his hands, trusting in his good faith, to be killed without judge or jury, because he had put Saul to death at Saul's own request ; although David was at that time actually at war with Saul, and in rebellion against him. David was such a holy man, that he was considered as worthy of being the father of the Messiah, although he committed the same crimes which that miserable wretch Strang did, who was hung in Albany.

Solomon is represented as being endowed with wisdom from on High, and yet he had one thousand wives and concubines, and oppressed the Jews with heavy taxes for the purpose of erecting costly and magnificent

temples and palaces. Would the Americans think that their legislators had much wisdom if they were to pursue the same course? There is hardly a character of any note in the Old Testament who did not commit at least one murder. These are but a few samples of immorality contained in this book. There are parts of it that are not fit to be read in public, and hardly in private. I now ask, is this a fit book to give criminals to read? Is it calculated to improve their morals? Will not a man who is confined in the State prison for bigamy, say that it is unjust to punish him for having two or three wives, when Solomon had a thousand? Will not a murderer on the scaffold say, that it is not right to hang him for killing one man, when David and a host of others slew thousands, and yet retained the favor of the Almighty?

Let us now turn to the New Testament, and hear what it says. "Every tree is known by its fruit. An evil tree bringeth not forth good fruit, neither doth a good tree bring forth evil fruit." Now what fruit has this tree brought forth? Has it brought forth good or evil? The Romans never prospered after the time of Constantine, in whose reign it may be said that they embraced Christianity. True, the empire had begun to decline before his time; but as it is a *Divine* religion, it might reasonably be expected that the *Divine* blessing would follow it? Has the *Divine* blessing followed it? When its ministers were in possession of absolute power in Europe, were the people happy and prosperous? I think not. At the present day, those countries in which priests have most power, the people are most miserable. Italy, Spain, and Portugal, have as fine climates and as fertile soils as any countries in Europe, and are the most miserable. In France and England they have less power, and the consequence is, that the people are more enterprising, and countries more prosperous. In this they have no part in the government, (and I hope they never will) and the consequence is that it is the most flourishing on the earth.

THE HISTORY OF THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.

The author of the following strictures, is not without apprehension that he may excite the indignation of many worthy persons, whose zeal may catch fire at so free a disquisition, on what they have always been taught to esteem a sacred character; this is what he should be extremely sorry for, but a blind reverence not having had sufficient influence over him to make him read with his eyes shut, he has represented matters as they appear to him; giving his vouchers for every fact as he proceeds—he enters upon the inquiry from honest motives, and flatters himself that it will be acceptable to all who entertain adequate notions of the eternal rectitude of the Deity. Those who estimate a man's religion by his implicit faith, and think it their duty to stifle their living objections in compliance with the dead letter, (for objections they will have, and very strong ones too) will undoubtedly be shocked at this publication; such will produce numerous texts in opposition; but can *inspired* writings be inconsistent with themselves?

The design is to discover how far the general tenor of David's conduct entitles him to the character of *The Man after God's own Heart*—if he enjoys it justly, an examination, so far from sullyng his reputation,

will give it lustre; if he does not enjoy it justly, will sincere inquirers after truth regret being led to form a proper judgment where they have hitherto rested with a dissatisfied acquiescence? To form an idea of the rectitude of his principles, we can only inspect his actions—we have only to examine his life as contained in the Old Testament, where we shall find facts incontestible on which to found our opinion.

The author is aware of two formidable obstacles to his design.

I. The broken unconnected manner in which the history is transmitted to us, which renders it impossible to give a complete narrative of any period in it.

II. The partial representation of it, as being written by the Jews themselves.

In some measure to surmount these obstacles, the author assumes the liberty of giving *his* sense to the passages which seem to be obscure or misrepresented—this, he hopes, will not be denied him, so long as there is no appearance of a forced construction being put upon any of them, or of their being represented in any other light than what they would naturally appear in, if examined with the same freedom which is used in reading Tacitus, Rollin or Rapin, and which ought to be used towards all; but lest it should be thought that too great liberties are taken with the biblical writers, it may not be improper to mention, that innumerable instances might be produced to shew that the authority of *the Lord*, so continually quoted to sanctify every transaction, constituted, in general, nothing more than national phrases which obtained universally among so bigoted a people; one twelfth part of whom were appropriated to the priesthood.

Let no one then be so timid as to resign an inclination to satisfy just doubts, or prescribe limits to the exercise of his reasoning faculties—an honest desire to obtain truth will sanctify the most rigid scrutiny into every thing. The love of truth ought to supersede every other consideration; for every other consideration is inferior to it. Truth requires no tenderness, and scorns all subterfuges.

The first establishment of regal government among the Hebrews, was occasioned by the corrupt administration of Joël and Abiah, the two sons of Samuel; whom he had deputed to judge Israel in the decline of his life. (1 Sam. viii. 3.) The people, exasperated at the oppression they labored under, rose in a tumultuous manner, and applied to Samuel for redress; testifying a desire to experience a different mode of government; by peremptorily demanding a king. (1 Sam. viii. 5.) At this, however, Samuel was greatly displeased; not that his sons had tyrannised over the people, for of this he takes no manner of notice; neither exculpating them, nor promising the people redress; his chagrin was owing to the violent resumption of the supreme magistracy out of the hands of his family; a circumstance, for which he expresses the bitterest resentment. (v. 6, &c.) He consults the Lord; and not knowing else how the insurrection might terminate, in his name yields to their desires; promising them a king, with a vengeance to them. *For, says the Lord, they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me that I should not reign over them.* The people, notwithstanding, obstinately persisted in their demand, and dispersed not without a promise of compliance.

Samuel apparently chose the most impartial method of electing a king, which was by lot from among the people assembled by tribes; but prudently pitches upon his man previous to the election; as the whole tenor of his conduct manifests that he intended to give them a king, in name; but to have one subordinate to his will. Opportunely for this purpose, Saul, a raw country lad, having rambled about to seek his father's asses, which had strayed, and finding all search after them in vain, applied to Samuel as a prophet, (1 Sam. ix. 7, 8.) with a fee in his hand, to gain intelligence of his beasts.

We gather from several passages in Jewish history, that there were seminaries of prophets, that is, the universities of the times where youth were trained up to the mystery of prophesying. We find there were false-prophets, non-conformists, not of the establishment; we find that such could even impose upon true ones; (1 Kings xiii. 18.) and we find moreover, by this instance, that prophets did not disdain to give assistance in their prophetic character, concerning domestic matters, for reasonable gratuities. A chief among the prophets, one who had been a judge over Israel, is applied to for intelligence concerning lost cattle. But Saul not only found his asses, but a kingdom into the bargain; and had the spirit of the Lord given to him, (1 Sam. x. 6.) which we find taken away (ch. xvi. 14.) again, when he proved untractable; though it seems somewhat odd, that he should prove disobedient, while he acted under the influence of this divine spirit!

After Samuel had in private (ch. x. 1.) anointed Saul king, and told him his asses were already found, he dismissed him. He next assembled the people for the election of a king: at which assembly, behold the lot fell on the tribe of Benjamin; and in that, on the family of Matri; and ultimately, on Saul the son of Kith. (v. 20, 21.) An election somewhat resembling consistories for the election of bishops; where the person being previously fixed upon, they pray solemnly to God for a direction of their choice.

It is not intended here to give a detail of the reign of king Saul; the notice hitherto taken of him being merely because the life of David could not be properly introduced without mentioning the cause of the alteration of government, and the manner in which monarchy was first established; since Samuel's disappointment in Saul, naturally leads to his similar election of David.

The disobedience of Saul, in sparing one man, and some cattle, from a nation which Samuel in the name of the Lord commanded him utterly to extirpate, (1 Sam. xv. 3.) irrecoverably lost him the favor of this impetuous creator of kings; and in the end, produced the miserable destruction not only of himself, but of all his family; which will occasion no surprise, when we consider the absolute dominion and ascendancy which the Jewish clergy maintained over this superstitious people.

We are not to imagine that the sparing of Agag, king of the Amalekites, was the only cause of the rupture between him and Samuel; for we may gather from other parts of his history, that Saul was not overwell affected towards his patrons the Levites, (1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19. xxviii. 9.) whom he had too much spirit to continue under subjection to. This, however, was the occasion on which Samuel chose to declare

himself; he haughtily avowed an intention of deposing him; (ch. xv. 21. 26.) and ordering Agag to be brought into his presence, he hewed him in pieces, *before the Lord*.

We now come to the hero of the history.

In pursuance of his intention to make another king, Samuel goes, under the pretence of a sacrifice, and anoints another shepherd boy, (Sam. xvi. 13.) which was David, the youngest son of Jesse, the Bethlehemite; and gave him the spirit of the Lord; which he had just taken from poor Saul. The king in the mean time reflecting on the precariousness of his situation, now that the priests, in the person of Samuel, were exasperated against him; and well knowing their importance among his subjects, fell into a melancholy disorder of mind, which his physicians were unable to remove.—Josephus.

This was made the occasion of bringing David to court. The king was advised to divert himself with music; and it was contrived to recommend David to him for his skill on the harp. (Sam. xvi. 18.) Saul accordingly sent to Jesse, requesting to have his son; which was immediately complied with; and David was kept at court, in the capacity of the king's armor-bearer.

Here the story begins to grow confused, beyond *lay skill* to reconcile. A war with the Philistines is abruptly introduced; in the midst of the relation of which, we are as abruptly informed that David returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep again; from whence his father sent him with provision for his brothers, who were in the army. (v. 17.) What can we think of this? Jesse hardly recalled his son from the honorable post of armor-bearer to the king! It is not likely that he was turned off, since we afterwards find him playing on the harp to the king as before; neither was it a proper employment for the king's armor-bearer to be feeding sheep, when the army was in the field and his majesty with them in person! Why—the most easy method, is to take it as we find it; to suppose it to be right, and go quietly on with the story.

In the Philistine army was a man of extraordinary size, named Goliath; who came out of their camp, day by day, challenging and defying any one among the Hebrews to single combat, and to rest the decision of their quarrel upon the event of the battle between them; an offer which no one among the Israelites had hitherto been found hardy enough to accept. (1 Sam. xvii. 4, &c.) David arrived at the army just as it was forming for engagement; at which time the giant advanced as before, with reproachful menaces; and after inquiring carefully concerning what reward would be given to the conqueror of this giant, and finding that great riches and the king's daughter would be the prize of conquest, David courageously declared before Saul, his acceptance of the challenge, (1 Sam. xvii. 31.) notwithstanding the contempt with which his offer was treated.

Saul, relying on the youth's ardor, and assurance of victory, girded his own armour on him; but David put it off again, trusting entirely to a pouch of stones, and his own skill in slinging. The success answered his hopes, and stamped a rash undertaking with a more respectable name; he knocked Goliath down with a stone; then ran in upon him,

cut his head off with his sword, and brought it triumphantly to the king of Israel. The consequence was the defeat of the Philistines.

Here we meet with another stumbling block. For though Saul, as we have already observed, had sent to Jesse expressly for his son David; though David played to him on the harp; though Saul had again sent to Jesse, to desire that David might be permitted to stay with him; and in consequence of this had created him his armor-bearer; though he had now a fresh conference with him; had just put his own suit of armor on him: though all these occurrences must have happened within a small space of time, yet his memory is made to fail him so suddenly, that he knew nothing of David or his parentage! but while David went to meet the giant, he inquired of others, who proved as ignorant as himself, whose son the stripling was? This stumbling block we must likewise step over, for it is not to be removed.

The reputation which this gallant action procured to David, soon gained him advancement in the army, and a warm friendship with Saul's son Jonathan. But the inordinate acclamation of the people, on account of the death of the Philistine giant, *Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands*, a rhodomontade beyond measure extravagant, when we compare the two subjects of contrast—justly occasioned Saul to view David with a jealous eye. We have all the reason in the world to believe that Samuel and the priests made every possible advantage of an adventure so fortunate for their secondary king to improve his growing popularity, which event at its outset had so far exceeded all bounds of decency: *What, said Saul, can he have more but the kingdom?* And we may therefore conclude that the king saw enough to alarm him: for we are told, that *Saul eyed David from that day and forward*. Thus we find, that on the day following, while David played as usual on his harp before Saul, the king cast a javelin at him, which David avoided. Saul then made him a captain over a thousand; saying, *let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him*. He likewise made him the offer of his daughter Merab for his wife; but she, we know not why, was given to another, afterwards Michal; and David's modesty (v. 23.) on this occasion was incomparably well acted; he knowing himself, at the same time, to be secretly intended for the kingdom by Saul.

Saul, upon reflection, concluding it dangerous to execute any open act of violence against this young hero, cunningly hoped to ensnare him, by exalting him high in his favor; or to get rid of him by putting him upon his mettle, in performing feats of valor; for a deficiency of courage is not to be numbered among David's faults. It was with this view that the king yet required of him an hundred Philistine foreskins, (v. 25. according to Josephus, 600 heads) as the condition of his becoming his son-in-law.

Had presents of value been required, a man of ability and generosity might with a very good grace have overpaid the demand; but where the lives of men, even though enemies, are concerned, a person actuated by the feelings of humanity, would have adhered but to the exact number required. David, however, in this instance, gave the first proof of delight in blood, by producing double the number asked, *in full tale!*

(v. 27.) It argues nothing to plead the different manners of mankind, in those early and less civilized ages of the world; for, if he was *then* the man after God's own heart, *God is unalterable*: and always required that we should do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with him.

David still advanced in his military reputation, (ch. xix. 8. 30.) and met with a powerful advocate in the person of Jonathan, his brother-in-law and faithful friend; who effected a temporary reconciliation between him and Saul; (1 Sam. xix. 4.) at which time Saul swore he would no more attempt his life. Nevertheless, whether it was that he could not get the better of his jealousy, or whether it was that he still discovered David intriguing with the priests, we know not; consequences incline to the latter conjecture. Saul made two more attempts to kill him, (Sam. xix. 10, 11.) from one of which he was protected by his wife Michal; and finding it not safe to stay at court, he fled to Samuel in Ramah. Hither Saul sent messengers to apprehend him, (v. 20.) but these it seems, seeing Samuel presiding over a company of prophets, and prophesying, were seized with the spirit of prophesying also; and not only so, but it is related, that Saul finding this, went at last himself to just the same purpose; for he likewise prophesied, (v. 23.) stripping himself naked, in which condition he continued for a day and a night.

This is an extremely odd relation! Had not the historian added the particulars concerning Saul, it might with great plausibility be supposed that David and the prophets had corrupted and bought off these emissaries which were sent after him; but when the king is said to have prophesied, and his prophesying to have been attended with such extravagant circumstances, as stripping himself, and lying in that condition for a day and a night! we in this case have no other mode of conception, but the supposition that the prophets knew how to inspire this bigoted people with occasional fits of enthusiastic frenzy! such fits, and such only, being able to produce extravagancies of this nature. Profane history, both ancient and modern, will suggest instances which will render this supposition probable. Had the subject of Saul's prophesying been transmitted down to us, it might have greatly illustrated this passage in the history; but no; he is barely said to have *prophesied*; which is a vague term, signifying sometimes a prediction of future events, and at others merely a delivery of pious orations, otherwise understood by the word *preaching*. But the spirit of God is *introduced* on all these occasions; this is said to have been upon Saul; and this is sufficient to stop all impertinent, inquisitive folks. Thus, after much ado about nothing, we leave it—just as we found it.

Afterwards David had a private interview with Jonathan, being afraid to appear at court. (1 Sam. xx. 1.) At this meeting, Jonathan, who had conceived too great an affection for this man, and was at length seduced by him from the duty and allegiance which he owed to his father and king, solemnly vowed, (v. 12.) that he would sound his father's intentions the next day, on which, being the festival of the new moon, David's attendance was expected at the king's table; and that he would warn him of any danger intended him. David lay hid in a field, until

Jonathan brought him the required intelligence; and when the king asked after him, Jonathan, as had been before concerted, said that he had requested leave to go and perform a family sacrifice at Bethlehem. Saul's reply on this occasion is very pertinent, and shews that his antipathy to David was not the causeless inveteracy of a disordered mind: "Then Saul's anger was kindled against Jonathan, and he said unto him, Thou son of the perverse rebellious woman, do not I know that thou hast chosen the son of Jessee to thine own confusion, and unto the confusion of thy mother's nakedness? For as long as the son of Jessee liveth upon the ground, thou shalt not be established, nor thy kingdom: wherefore now send and fetch him unto me, for he shall surely die." Jonathan expostulated with his father, and had a javelin hurled at him for his pains. [To be continued.]

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1828.

Pious Line of Stages.—We give publicity to the following address, because we are persuaded that the object contemplated by the projectors of the new line of steam-boats, canal-boats, and stages, is the overthrow of public liberty—a violation of the constitution of the United States, and involving the destruction of a most necessary, useful, and industrious class of our fellow citizens. It is high time, indeed, when bigots and fanatics arrogantly assume the right of dictation, that their base designs should be exposed and reprobated.

TO MERCHANTS.

The first encroachment on our religious or political liberties should be resisted with firmness. It is our duty to oppose and put down religious *cant* and *hypocrisy*, in whatever shape it may appear. It may not be generally understood, that an extensive combination of individuals has been forming in this state for the last four months, the object of which is to stop the running of Steam-Boats, Canal-Boats, Stages, and every vehicle for the conveyance of travellers or goods on the first day of the week, (called Sunday,) under a hypocritical mask of preventing a violation of the fourth Commandment to the Jews, which says, "the seventh day is the Sabbath." Yet such is the fact.

These misguided zealots threaten to take away all business from those lines that continue to run as heretofore, and to have the "finger of scorn" pointed at any man who may venture to travel on **THEIR holy day**. Violent efforts have been made to draw into this scheme all the different establishments for conveying merchandise or travellers, and as yet only one line of Canal-Boats has fallen into these measures. This is the HUDSON & ERIE LINE, belonging to Messrs. *Allen & Chapin*.

All friends to good order and morality, and enemies to *religious fraud*, it is presumed, will unite as "one man," and put down this anti-christian combination—formed expressly and avowedly for the purpose of breaking down any man *who does not read his Bible with their spectacles*—who shall venture to serve the community by transporting merchandise in the most expeditious manner. Remember the Hudson and

Erie Line of Boats lay up *on the first day of the week*, and of course cannot go as far in *six days* as other regular lines do in *seven*. Any man, or set of men, who lend their aid for the direct purpose of oppressing or coercing a community in their measures, forfeit their claim to public patronage.

Mr. Owen's System.—It will be seen by the following address of Mr. Owen, since his return to New Harmony, that the great barrier to the introduction of his philanthropic system, is *superstition*. We have always been of opinion, that religious prejudices would be the most formidable enemy he had to encounter. Indeed, we consider all the crime, misery, and wretchedness existing in society, as originating in that source; and until effectual measures are pursued, measures placed in every one's power, by supporting an unrestricted press, and by conferring a proper education on children, we are apprehensive that all other efforts to ameliorate the condition of man, will prove abortive. Much as has been already done to accomplish this great and desirable end, and rapidly as liberal principles are extending, the friends of truth have a wide field of action before them. The enemy are numerous and indefatigable; and above all, they possess the *means* of maintaining the power they have usurped over the human mind, of which they can only be deprived by the extensive diffusion of knowledge. Mr. Owen seems to think that the clergy will soon have their eyes opened to their true interests, and renounce their present pursuits. We have some doubts as to this. At all events, we are satisfied, that unless the character of the priesthood has undergone a radical change—unless these pretended “ambassadors of heaven” have become less arrogant and more honest than they have hitherto been, they will not abandon a profession, by which they continue to live in affluence and ease, without a more than ordinary struggle. The press is the great engine they dread, and that engine should never relax in its efforts to prostrate spiritual tyranny.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY ROBERT OWEN

*At a public meeting of the inhabitants of New Harmony, on Sunday,
April 13, 1828.*

Since I left you, I have made another visit to the old world to see what had been doing there in my absence. I found the same overwhelming causes of distress in full activity that were in progress when I left it, and which causes had been continually advancing for several years previously. I mean inventions and discoveries to supersede manual labor in all the principal departments of life, and an increase of poverty among the producers of real wealth in proportion to the increase which had been made in these scientific improvements. Every step in this progress tends to accumulate large masses of useless wealth in the hands of a few individuals, and to withdraw it from the industrious producer.

The necessary consequence of a diminution of manual labor is an increase of crime; which again necessarily produces through all the ramifications of society, from the lowest to the highest, an increase of misery. The only remedy proposed in Great Britain by the united wis-

dom of its parliament, is to induce a spirit of emigration among the producing classes. And while the individual system shall prevail, a continued emigration will be their only relief.

The United States are following the example of Great Britain in its rapidity of production ; and they will soon experience many of its evils. The productions of this continent which are necessary to the best state of human existence, will very shortly be in such abundance as to exceed the demand for them ; and as soon as that period shall arrive, manual labor will decrease in value, and the non-producers will become the lords and oppressors. Experience has proved that the happiness of States is always in proportion to the equality of their population in knowledge and wealth ; but the system in progress in the United States tends to form an Aristocracy composed of the Priesthood, the Lawyers, and the wealthy ; and threatens to produce a state of society the least calculated to promote the general welfare and happiness of any population.

These are the evils to be guarded against. On the other hand, there are many reasons to rejoice in the prospect of the future. Owing to various causes, knowledge in the old as in the new world is making a silent yet sure progress among the mass of the people. The introduction of Infant Schools and Mechanic Institutes, and their almost daily increase in Great Britain, imperfect as the new modes of instruction are, is effecting such a gradual change in the minds of the superior producing classes as will enable them, ere long, to give a new and very different direction to the progress of inventions and discoveries which at present threaten to overwhelm them and their posterity.

Superstition, also, among the enlightened part of society, is rapidly on the decline ; Free-Press Associations are becoming popular, and the minds of the better informed among the middle classes are daily collecting strength to throw off the shackles of religious oppression, together with the deception and vice which these every where produce. A little longer, and the priesthood will have no influence over any portion of the population except the most ignorant, and those who are compelled to become hypocrites to gain elections into office to obtain a livelihood. No one but these will believe, or pretend to believe, that a Power infinitely wise and good, and who does all things by his might, should, knowing what he was about, make a devil to counteract his own operations, and create human beings to disobey his express wishes and commands. None but irrational beings could be made to believe, or rather to think they believe these or any such palpable contradictions and absurdities.

The time is at hand when the priesthood will discover that they individually suffer, and grievously too, by teaching mankind these degrading errors, and keeping men, in consequence, so profoundly ignorant as we find them at this day. They will, I conclude, now speedily perceive the mistake which they have made, and pursue a different and much wiser course. They must do so shortly, or they will find the whole of the intelligent part of society opposed to them. Let them instruct the people in real knowledge that might be of use to them, instead of filling their minds with imaginary notions of useless speculations about incomprehensible

superstitions, and they will then render their fellow-creatures a real and permanent service. At present they are a stumbling block in the way of every valuable improvement. They are an incubus, pressing the population of all countries down to the lowest point of mental degradation and vice, and rendering the rational faculties of mankind a continued curse to the world—those faculties which under a different direction might become an invaluable blessing.

The Priesthood will make this change in their conduct speedily, or they will prepare themselves to enter into an open mental conflict with the most intelligent and conscientious of the human race. It is my opinion that they will act rationally and adopt the former alternative, and every facility ought to be offered them to do so with the least inconvenience. The world had better pay them twice or ten times as much for instructing it in what is true, than pay them as it does at present for perpetuating ignorance, poverty, and vice, by destroying the reason of man

From the facts and considerations which I have now stated, my conviction is, that the general progress of knowledge and decline of superstition among the people of Europe and the United States will speedily effect a great change for the better, in their condition. Men cannot proceed much farther in the acquisition of real knowledge, without discovering what things are necessary for human happiness and what is the shortest and best method to obtain them permanently; without being, as at present, dependent for them on the will of a few capricious wealthy individuals, who derive all their power and influence from the ignorance and industry of the many whom they oppress.

It is full time that these greivous evils should terminate. To hasten this period, I left Europe to come here where the greater freedom of the constitution on the subject of religion admitted experiments to be tried for the benefit of the human race, which could not be attempted, with any reasonable prospect of success, where superstition is the law of the land. I came here with a determination to try what could be effected in this new country to relieve my fellow men from superstition, and mental degradation; so that if successful, the experiment should be an example which all might follow, and by which all might benefit.

[To be Continued.]

New Liberal Papers.—Our Philadelphia correspondent writes that the liberal friends there are very energetic, and contemplate the establishment of a periodical work, to be entitled the "Herald of Truth, and Antisuperstitionist."

We also learn from Cincinnati, that since Mr. Gazley disposed of his interest in the *Teller*, that paper was entirely changed as respected liberal principles; in consequence of which, another paper, to be called "The March of Mind," was about to appear, in which the friends of truth would have "an opportunity to *skirmish* with the enemy, if they be unable to meet them in pitched battle."

Several religious papers have been lately sent us from the country; one of which, published at Boston, is entitled "A Cry from the Four Winds, in the cause of Religious Liberty, and against Clerical Intrigue,

and Ecclesiastical Oppression." Although the "Cry" is of a *sectarian* cast, we are glad to find the opinion so prevalent that it is absolutely necessary to assail the priesthood, if we wish to preserve our liberties. We perceive by the same paper, that it is in contemplation to establish a Society in Boston "for the free discussion of subjects of a religious nature, and for improvement in the art of reasoning and speaking. The ground on which this society will be founded, is the *Omnipotence of Truth*, and that the best way to advance it, is *free inquiry*."

Observance of Sunday.—The Corporation Attorney has been extremely active, of late, in getting up prosecutions against our citizens for what are called violations of Sunday. The law under which these proceedings are had, being considered *unconstitutional* by every unprejudiced person in the community, we are much pleased to find that measures are about to be taken to obtain the repeal of the obnoxious regulation. In our next, we shall notice a case tried under this law in one of our Ward Courts.

MISCELLANEOUS.

St. Simeon.—Heliodorus required Simeon to be more private in his mortifications "with this view," says Butler "judging the rough rope of the well, made of twisted palm tree leaves a proper instrument of penance, Simeon tied it close about his naked body, where it remained unknown both to the community and his superior, till such time as it having ate unto his flesh, what he had privately done was discovered by the effluvia proceeding from the wound." Butler says, that it took three days to disengage the saint's clothes, and that "the incisions of the physician, to cut the cord out of his body were attended with such anguish and pain, that he lay for some time as dead." After this he determined to pass the whole forty days of Lent in total abstinence, and retired to a hermitage for that purpose. Bassus, an abbot, left with him ten loaves and water, and coming to visit him at the end of the forty days, found both loaves and water untouched, and the saint stretched on the ground without signs of life. Bassus dipped a sponge in water, moistened his lips, gave him the eucharist, and Simeon by degrees swallowed a few lettuce leaves and other herbs. He passed twenty-six Lents in the same manner. In the first part of a Lent he prayed standing; growing weaker he prayed sitting; and towards the end being almost exhausted, he prayed lying on the ground. At the end of three years he left his hermitage for the top of a mountain, made an inclosure of loose stones, without a roof, and having resolved to live exposed to the inclemencies of the weather, he fixed his resolution by fastening his right leg to a rock with a great iron chain. Multitudes thronged to the mountain to receive his benediction, and many of the sick recovered their health; but as some were not satisfied unless they touched him in his enclosure, and Simeon desired retirement from the daily concourse, he projected a new and unprecedented manner of life. He erected a pillar six cubits high, (each cubit being eighteen inches,) and dwelt on it four

years ; on a second of twelve cubits high he lived three years ; on a third of twenty-two cubits high ten years ; and on a fourth of forty cubits, or sixty feet high which the people built for him, he spent the last twenty years of his life. This occasioned him to be called *stylites*, from the Greek word *stylos*, a pillar. This pillar did not exceed three feet in diameter at the top, so that he could not lie extended on it : he had no seat with him he only stooped or leaned to take a little rest, and bowed his body in prayer so often, that a certain person who counted these positions, found that he made one thousand two hundred and forty-four reverences in one day, which if he began at four o'clock in the morning and finished at eight o'clock at night, gives a bow to every three-quarters of a minute ; besides which he exhorted the people twice a day. His garments were the skins of beasts, he wore an iron collar round his neck, and had a horrible ulcer in his foot. During his forty days' abstinence throughout Lent, he tied himself to a pole. He treated himself as an outcast of the world and the worst of sinners, worked miracles, delivered prophecies, had the sacrament delivered to him on the pillar, and died bowing upon it, in the sixty-ninth year of his age, after having lived upon pillars for six and thirty years.

Near Simeon's pillar was the dwelling of a dragon, so very venomous, that nothing grew near his cave. This dragon met with an accident ; he had a stake in his eye, and coming all blind to the saint's pillar, and placing his eye upon it for three days without doing harm to any one, Simeon ordered earth and water to be placed on the dragon's eye, which being done, out came the stake, a cubit in length ; when the people saw this, they glorified God, and ran away for fear of the dragon, who arose and adored for two hours, and returned to his cave. A woman swallowed a little serpent, which tormented her for many years, till she came to Simeon, who causing earth and water to be laid on her mouth, the little serpent came out four feet and a half long. It is affirmed by the Golden Legend, that when Simeon died, Anthony smelt a precious odor proceeding from his body ; that the birds cried so much, that both men and beasts cried ; that an angel came down in a cloud ; that the patriarch of Antioch taking Simeon's beard to put among his relics, his hand withered, and remained so till multitudes of prayers were said for him, and it was healed : and that more miracles were worked at and after Simeon's sepulchre, than he had wrought all his life.

The Jews.—Selden says, "Talk what you will of the Jews, that they are cursed, they thrive wherever they come : they are able to oblige the prince of their country by lending him money ; none of them beg ; they keep together ; and for their being hated, my life for yours, Christians hate one another as much." This was true, but it is also true that three quarters of a century have not elapsed since hatred to the Jews was a national feeling. In 1753 a bill was brought into the House of Lords for naturalizing the Jews and relieving them from persecuting disabilities. It passed there on the ground that it would operate to the public advantage, by encouraging wealthy persons professing the Jewish religion to remove hither from foreign parts to the increase of the capital, commerce, and credit of the kingdom. The corporation of London in com-

mon council assembled, petitioned against it on the ground that it would dishonor the christian religion, endanger the constitution, and prejudice the interest and trade of the kingdom in general, and London in particular. A body of London merchants and traders also petitioned against it. Certain popular orators predicted that the bill passed, the Jews would multiply so fast, become so rich, and get so much power, that their persons would be revered, their customs be imitated, and Judaism become the fashionable religion; they further alleged that the bill flew in the face of prophecy, which declared that the Jews should be scattered without a country or fixed habitation till their conversion, and that in short it was the duty of Christians to be unchristian. But the bill passed the commons after violent debates, and received the royal sanction. The nation was instantly in a ferment of horror and execration; and on the first day of the next session of parliament, ministers were constrained to bring in a bill to repeal the act of naturalization, and to the foul dishonor of the people of England at that period, the bill was repealed. From that hour to the present, the Jews have been subjected to their old pains, penalties, disqualifications, and privations. The enlightenment of this age has dispelled much of the darkness of the last. Yet the errors of public opinion then respecting the Jews, remain to be rectified now by the solemn expression of a better public opinion. Formerly, if one of the "ancient people" had said in the imploring language of the slave, "Am I not a *man*, and a brother?" he might have been answered, "No, you are not a *man*, but a *Jew*. It is not the business of the Jews to petition for justice, but it is the duty of Christians to be just.

Baptism.—How strange an idea—that a pot of water should wash away every crime? Now all children are baptised, because an idea no less absurd supposes them all criminal; they are all saved until they have the use of reason, and the power to become guilty! Cut their throats, then, as quickly as possible, to ensure their entrance into paradise. This is so just a consequence, that there was once a devout sect that went about poisoning and killing all newly-baptised infants. These devout persons reasoned with perfect correctness, saying—"We do these little innocents the greatest possible good; we prevent them from being wicked and unhappy in this life, and we give them life eternal."

Free Press Association.—The meetings of this Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 18th inst, at half past 10 o'clock forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The *Correspondent*, is now published at 422 Broadway. Terms \$3 per annum in advance. The first four numbers having been reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 18.

NEW-YORK, MAY 24, 1828.

Vol. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"LIBELS,"

Or the Christian art of suppressing the TRUTH, in Law, in Morality, and in Religion.

MR. EDITOR—Having recently seen an article from the Editor of the Statesman, lamenting the deplorable condition of the people of Old England, under their infamous laws on libels; according to which, the TRUTH of the matter published, is no defence or justification for the virtuous mortal, who has been prompted by a love for truth, or by the purest benevolence, to expose notorious scoundrels, in order to warn others from falling a prey to such harpies.

Another part of this damnable and vilest of all laws is, that *the greater the truth the greater is the libel*; and the higher the officer, the higher is the offence committed against him.

This is the law of a Christian land, of a Christian nation, and of Christian priests! And yet was invented by the vilest of villains, and for the sole purpose of protecting the greatest villains in their vilest villainies.

Happy, thrice happy, are the people of the Northern States, who demolished that temple of iniquity, immediately after our revolution and separation from that modern "whore of Babylon;" and who ever since, have made TRUTH the polar star of all their legislation.

But it is not so with the South; for there, truth is still banished from the land, and in Virginia, the old infernal English laws on libels are in full force, and in their broadest latitude too! Yes, Sir! It is the law of Virginia; a Christian State; one who even *legislates in favor of Christianity*; and who boasts more than all the rest, of her enlightened statesmen and enlightened laws! But when the "blind lead," the leaders as well as the followers, are sure to fall into such a "ditch" as Virginia is now in. Even Hercules himself cannot lift their state wagon out of that mire into which they are now stuck fast. But a "Convention" may. While such abominable laws are in force, you may know of a dozen Bishops or Archbishops, who keep mistresses, and attend horse-races; but you dare not publish such outrages against morality and religion to the world. Or you may know of hundreds of gambling hypocritical priests, who get drunk, ride at fox-hunts, and cuckold some of their deluded hearers; but you must not publish such facts, or expose such scoundrels to the nation. Or you may know of governors or legislators, who are hypocrites in religion, and void of honor in morality; but you must not publish any such facts to their constituents. Or you

may know of men who pilfer your treasury ; but you must not publish any such defalcation to the people who pay the taxes. Or you may know of Justices, who have declared before a trial came before them, how they would decide on such a trial ; but you must not publish such things to the people. Or you may know of some district attorneys, who have struck other attorneys in the presence of all the court, for the want of more forcible arguments ; but you must not publish such disgraceful acts to the people. Or you may know of some young attorneys, who have struck old grey haired and crippled gentlemen, but you must not publish such things to the world. Or you may know of some young district attorneys, who, in order to keep up some appearance of courage, challenge all the old grey haired gentleman, who refuse to believe every thing they say ; but you must not let the public know them. Or you may know of some attorneys who have confessed that they procured some convictions by "*fraud and collusion* ;" but you must not publish such acts, even for the public good. Or you may know of men who declared previously to certain trials, that they were too much interested in certain suits, even to be a witness ; and yet had the modesty to come forward, when such trials were likely to go against their friend from the want of their testimony, and swear that they had no interest whatever in the same suits ; but you must not publish such facts to the world. Or you may know of some attorneys whose maxim is, that every thing is *lawful* which is not forbidden by our laws ; which of course includes lying, deceit, and other trifles of that kind ; and yet profess to be Christians, and boast of their belief in "*revelation*" and "*inspiration* ;" nay, presume to stigmatize as "*Infidels*," men of the purest honor, who have never been guilty of falsehood or deceit ; but you must not publish these things to the people. Or you may know of some men who have sworn falsely ; but you must not guard the community against men more dangerous than the highway robber, by publishing them. Or you may know of men who pilfer the mail ; but you must not publish them. Or you may know of men who have seduced, or attempted to seduce, the wives or daughters of others ; but you must not expose them by making them public. Or you may know of men who have intercourse with negro women ; but you must not publish it to the world. Or if you know of any persons who have actually been convicted of any of these peccadillos before any court, you dare not publish the proceedings of any such courts !

Thus, you see, all the great Christian villains in Virginia, are as much protected by their law on libels, as all their great Christian brother scoundrels are in Great Britain. And what a damnable mixture of law, morality, and religion, must such a state of things produce in both countries !

When will Virginia begin to *advance* in her march towards the improvement of the human race ? for her *whites* are almost as great slaves as her *blacks* ; and she has retrograded a century at least, in her morals and religion, as well as legislation. She is now nearly as low as New-England was formerly, under her "*witches*" and "*Blue laws* ;" and as her cup of degradation is nearly full, we may soon hope to see some change for the better. And that the time is not far distant, when all

her laws on libels will be abolished, and the true law prevail ; which is, that every officer or citizen, should lead such a virtuous life as to *challenge* the truth, instead of suppressing it.

C. SHULTZ.

Virginia.

To the Editor of the National Gazette, Philadelphia..

SIR—Your paper contains such frequent panegyrics on the Christian religion, its divine origin, its absolute necessity to society and government, and so many vituperations against infidels, and their writings, that it is no wonder you are in high favor with the parsons, and all the orthodox old women, (male and female) of your city. You seem to place yourself at the head of the light armed troops, the guerilla warfare against heresy and infidelity. Your paragraphs exhibit your zeal, if not your prowess ; and show your adherence to the holy alliance between Church and State, and your pious hatred to all its opponents. I will not do you injustice by attributing all this exhibition of zeal without knowledge to popularity-hunting—to the success of your paper requiring this stage play. I will not do this, suspicious as appearances may be ; because, from what I have heard of your character, I am disposed to consider you as a well meaning and honest man ; better fitted, indeed, for skirmishing in paragraphs, than for any serious discussion, requiring learned or laborious research ; but sincerely expressing your real convictions. It is in this last and respectable character that I have taken the liberty of addressing you ; and request that you would save, if you can, your favorite Bible, from the disgraceful charges that now, for the hundredth time, have been brought against it ; without the semblance of a reply or an apology, from its innumerable host of salaried advocates. In good truth, these Swiss troops who fight for pay, are not to be relied upon in time of danger. *Non defensoribus istis, tempus egit.* The spirit truly is willing, but the head is weak. You will absolve us, however, from any impropriety in defending ourselves against your orthodox accusations, even though we should carry the war into the enemy's quarters.

In your paper of Thursday, April 10th, 1828, I find an extract from a letter of some priest or other, more weak than wise, who signs himself X. ; and which your good wishes to the good cause, has induced you to adopt and insert. It commences thus : "*No nation will be either prosperous or happy, which conforms not its laws to the spirit of that system of MORAL PRECEPTS which the God of nature gave to the Jews, and which pervades with exquisite harmony the whole of the Old and New Testament.*"

Now Sir, as your orthodox correspondent has written, and you in your wisdom have adopted this pious passage, you will not, I hope, complain, if those who dissent from your opinion should take the liberty of examining it, as I shall do. These vague and sweeping assertions by men who are paid for making them, and who live by the imposture they profess, can derive no support from authority : the question then is, as to the *moral precepts* which with such exquisite harmony pervade these books. How can we ascertain them but by referring to the books themselves ? I have done so, with the aid of the second volume of the *Cor-*

respondent, p. 260, as the ground work of the first of three letters which I propose to address to you, viz :

1. Proofs of the filthiness and obscenity that pervade the Old Testament.

2. Proofs of the cruelty, the revengeful spirit, the fraud, robbery, and falsehood, imputed in that book to God himself, and to his avowed favorites ; by precept, by example, or both.

I grant all this has been repeatedly and abundantly shown ; but the hired advocates of Christianity suppress, and never notice the objections so strongly and repeatedly made to it. They treat it as if it stood like the axioms of mathematics, perfectly free from all possible objection ! This is not very fair conduct ; but it is consistent with the fraudulent cunning of the whole class of Christian teachers. Hence, we have again and again to hold up in strong characters before the eyes of these blind leaders of the blind, the objections which they are determined not to see. Here, then, thou pious Editor, and thou pious assertor of silly falsehoods, the Rev. Mr. X., whoever you may be—here ; look at this black catalogue ; reply to it if ye can ; and prepare yourselves for the two next specimens of scripture morality, which I mean to offer for your consideration. In the mean time, I thank ye for the opportunity ye have afforded of bringing forward this infidel defence ; for surely, if we are attacked, we have a right not merely to defend, but to recriminate. In future, it will be our duty to defend ourselves by carrying the war into the enemy's quarters.

SPECIMENS OF FILTHINESS AND OBSCENITY.

The story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar. Genesis xvi. 1—16.

The account of Lot and his guests at Sodom. xix. 1—18.

The amours of Lot's daughters with their father. xix. 30—38.

The bargains of Rachel and Leah. xxx. 1—35.

Catamenia. xxxi. 35.

The ravishing of Dinah, &c. &c. xxxiv. 1—31.

Reuben and Bilhan. xxxv. 22.

Onan, Judah and Tamar. xxxviii. 8—30.

Potiphar's wife and Joseph. xxxix. 7—18.

Cases of uncleanness described. Leviticus xv. 15—33.

Prohibition of sexual intercourse. xviii. 1—30.

Bestiality. xx. 1—27.

Whoredom of the Israelites. Numbers xxv. 1—8.

Female captives ; cruelty towards them. xxxi. 17—35.

Tokens of virginity. Deuteronomy xxii. 13—30. 23 + 1-14

Assault by a woman. xxv. 11.

Circumcision. Joshua v. 1—8.

Sodomy and lust. Judges xix. 22—29.

Ravishment. xxi. 1—25.

Adultery and murder ; Abigail and Nabal. 1 Samuel xxv. 1—44.

David, Bathsheba, and Uriah. 2 Sam. xi.

Amnon and Tamar. xiii. 10—15.

Absalom with David's concubines. xvi. 22.

Solomon's 700 wives and 300 concubines. 1 Kings xi. 1.

Him that pisseth against a wall. 2 Kings ix. 8.

Grind unto another. Job xxxi. 9—10.

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's. i. to viii. throughout.

Immodesty. Isaiah iii. 17. xlvii. 1—3. ~~22-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100~~

Nastiness. Ezekiel iv. 13, &c. ~~22-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100~~

The same—very bad. xvi. throughout.

The same. xxii. throughout.

The same—very bad. xxiii. throughout.

The same. Hosea i. 1—6.

The same. iii. 1—3.

There might be some additions to this horrible list; but here is quite enough to show the character of these books, which a lying and fraudulent priesthood have the daring impudence to ascribe *verbatim et literatim*, to the immediate dictation and inspiration of the Deity! No instance of blasphemy can be adduced equal to this. No specimens of language too filthy for the most vulgar brothel, can be shown as employed in any other religion. The pagans were obscene; but this is beyond mere obscenity. No wonder that brothels for peduasty were built all around the temple at Jerusalem, and that, (using the words of St. Jerome) *pueris alienis adhaeruerunt*. Jerome on 2 Is. Boxius de sig. eccles. L. 7, ch. 4. Gaspar sanctius, ib. 4. 12. These Jewish practices were in "exquisite harmony" with the style of their own books.

I appeal to the Editor of the National Gazette—I appeal to his Rev. correspondent, X.—I appeal to any decent and well meaning reader of these pages—I ask of them, and each of them;—would you for any inducement under heaven, read aloud the passages I have referred to, to your family? Would you dare to violate the chaste ears, or contaminate the virgin purity of mind of a young female, by reading to her these abominable expressions and descriptions? I solemnly declare, I should shudder to myself to copy at full length the citations to which I have in this letter obscurely referred. How then can the book which contains them, be honestly recommended as favorable to decency and morality? What are we to think of the class of teachers, who solemnly proclaim the book which contains these detestable passages, to be the *word of God*? Aye, the *inspired* word of God! And who maintain themselves in comparative idleness and luxury, by maintaining the divine character of this strange collection!

There is hardly a family in the United States who does not possess a copy of the Bible. My assertions therefore concerning this book, and the passages referred to, can be verified or confuted at any moment. Deception is out of the question. To the Bible therefore I appeal; to the Law and to the Testimony. Let our adversaries do the same; and let us hear what defence they can make for facts impossible to be denied. Let those who will take the trouble of reading these passages, say when they have done so, whether the epithets I have applied to them are not deserved. What inducement can a plain man like myself, who has no interest whatever to gratify in this question but the interest of truth, and decency, and morality—what interest can such a man have to complain of the religion of his country without cause? What am I to gain by it? Surely neither profit or honor. You pay none of your contributors, and you know not who I am. Nor have I any ambition

to be known ; for so soon as I am known, so soon and so surely the rancorous hatred of an offended priesthood, with all the bad and merciless passions that avarice and ambition can stir up, will be employed to my injury ; nor shall I have any protection but my own insignificance.

On the contrary, is not the interest of the clergy pledged to the truth of the falsehoods by which they subsist ? Have they not a strong and manifest motive and interest to carry on the deception ? Think of the tribute they raise on public credulity in this city of New-York alone.

The Roman Catholic church, well knowing in how many ways this bible book is calculated to contaminate mental purity, forbids the indiscriminate use of it ; and properly. But disgusting as the task is, I cannot help thinking, that every mother should read these passages, that she may judge whether the book containing them is a proper book for her children to read.

TRUTH.

THE TRINITY.

MR. EDITOR—Is it possible that any person capable of reflection can believe that Deity is composed of a trinity of persons ? I would even ask those, who from education are attached to this doctrine, in what part of their own bible it is said, that the person whom they call the Father, is God Almighty ; that the Son is God Almighty ; and that the Spirit, or Holy Ghost is God Almighty—that there is a trinity in unity, and unity in trinity—or three persons in one God ? Facts so wonderful, and extraordinary, if true, would have been declared in the most positive manner ; and the more so, if, as it is said, they were in the least essential to man's salvation or future welfare. Would not Moses, or the writer of the books to which his name is affixed, instead of saying, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is *One Lord*," have declared in the most unequivocal manner, that the Lord, his God, was composed of *three Lords*, or *three persons* ? Would he not, when represented as prophesying of the appearance of the Messiah, have at once made known his *natures* and attributes, those of God and man in one being, instead of likening him to himself, when he is made to say, *The Lord your God shall raise up a Prophet from among your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear*. Would not those, who are termed the Evangelists and Apostles, if they had believed that Jesus was the *only true God*, have made it the constant subject of their Gospels and Epistles ? Would they not have made it known to the world in the plainest terms, that Jesus, *the mighty and omnipotent God*, or the second Person of the Trinity, had visited the earth in the form of a man ; or, rather, made his first appearance as a *God-infant*, born of a virgin ? Would they not have informed us, that it was the *Creator* of all things who laid in a manger with beasts ; who was *circumcised*, and who fled from the persecution of one of his creatures ? that it was the *Almighty Creator* of the universe, with whom men were so familiar, and whom they considered as their companion and equal ! that it was the maker of every good and perfect gift, who hungered and thirsted ; who was persecuted and insulted ! that it was the *all-wise* and *omnipotent God* who was tempted of the devil ; who wept over Jerusalem, and yet had not the power or inclination to save her ! that it was the *Almighty Maker* of

Heaven and of Earth, and all that is therein, who had not where to lay his head! that it was the *only living and true God* (Jesus Christ) who prayed to *another* only living and true God (the Father,) that the bitter cup of his wrath might pass from him! that it was the *all-glorious Supreme* who hid himself from the persecuting Jews, and who stood in need of his own angels to comfort and support him! that it was the *Almighty, Omniscient, and Everlasting God*, who was buffeted and spit upon; mocked and derided—who was betrayed by Judas, and scourged by Pilate! In short, and to bring this absurd climax to its close, would these Apostles or Evangelists have concealed from the world, or rather, would they not have stated in language that could by no individual be misunderstood, that it was the *immortal, immutable, omnipotent; the infinitely wise, and just, and good, and merciful, and benevolent God and Father of all mankind*, who was tried, condemned, and executed between two thieves, as a criminal and impostor!

Who would not prefer paganism, with all its absurdities, to the doctrine of the Trinity?—so repugnant to all the feelings of humanity, and so contradictory and inconsistent in itself.

CLIO.

WORD OF GOD.

MR. EDITOR—When any book is introduced into the world as the word of God, and made the ground work of religion, it ought to be scrutinized more than any other book, in order to ascertain if it possess evidence of what it is called. It is not our calling a book *holy* that makes it so, any more than our calling a religion holy entitles it to that name. Inquiry, then, is necessary, in order to arrive at truth. But inquiry must have some principles to proceed on—some standard to judge by—some settled point from which to start—superior to human authority.

When we survey the revolutions of the planetary system, and the whole economy of Nature, which is no other than the laws prescribed to matter, we see, taking that economy as a whole, unerring order, and universal harmony reigning throughout. No one part interferes with the other parts. The sun does not run against the moon, nor the moon against the sun, nor the planets against each other. Every thing keeps its appointed time or place. This harmony is so obvious, that the husbandman, though he cannot calculate eclipses, is as sensible of it as the philosophical astronomer.

Here then is the standard to which every thing must be brought that pretends to be the work of God; and by this standard it must be judged, independently of any thing and every thing that man can say or do. His opinion is like a feather in the scale compared with this standard.

It is, therefore, by this standard that the bible, and all other books pretending to be the word of God, (and there are many of them in the world) must be judged, and not by the opinions of men or the decrees of ecclesiastical councils. These have been so contradictory that they have often rejected in one council what they voted to be the word of God in another, and admitted what had before been rejected. In this state of uncertainty, which is rendered still more uncertain by the numerous contradictory sectaries that have sprung up, what is man to do?

The answer is easy. Begin at the root—begin with the Bible itself. Examine it with the utmost strictness. It is our duty so to do. Compare the parts with each other, and the whole with the harmonious magnificent order that reigns throughout the visible universe; and the result will be, that if the same Almighty wisdom that created the universe, dictated also the bible, the bible will be as harmonious and as magnificent in all its parts as the universe is. But if, instead of this, the parts are found to be discordant, contradicting in one place what is said in another, abounding also in idle and obscene stories, and representing the Almighty as a passionate whimsical being, continually changing his mind, making and unmaking his own works, as if he did not know what he was about, we may hold it for certainty that the creator of the universe is not the author of such a book; that it is not the word of God; and that to call it so is to dishonor his name.

OBSERVATOR.

SUPREME INTELLIGENCE.

MR. EDITOR—From a series of cogitations which I have occasionally noted, I extract the following; and offer it in answer (if it may be considered as such) to E. M. in the Correspondent for 10th instant. My opinions are honest, and if erroneous, I desire to have them corrected.

When we view the infinity of worlds which perpetually revolve through the immensity of space, minutely scan the multifiform operations of boundless nature, and contemplate the eternal system of universal natural phenomena, we discern all that can be positively known about a God; but when we attempt to proceed further, and endeavor to discover the existence of an original, intelligent Designer, Author, or Cause of that system, or to define something superior to Nature, we launch forth into an ocean of interminable speculation; and could we waft the fleet shallop of our imagination with the rapidity of thought through the billows of discussion for a thousand centuries, and should we survey every apparently tenable spot of argument which we might descry, we would not progress one decisive step beyond the point at which we first set out; we should continually create inexplicable chimeras, and encounter incessant turmoils of clashing opinions; and the utmost latitude of our research, would only enable us to declare, that the object of our inquiries *may be*, and *may not be*.

S. E. L.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1828.

The Antidote.—This paper, established for the avowed purpose of carrying on a perpetual warfare against the *Correspondent*, has sunk into oblivion in consequence of its own insignificance. When the first number appeared, we were led, from the boldness of its tone, to expect that its conductors were men of talents, who had entered on the contest with honorable feelings, and with a sincere desire to discover the truth. We were very soon convinced, however, that like every other paper which advocates religious opinions, the *Antidote* calculated on success only by supporting superstition, flattering the prejudices of the multitude, and calumniating every one who had the honesty and boldness to

detect and expose error. Its pages teemed with rant, rhapsody, misrepresentation, and frequently, gross falsehood. It was in vain that we pointed out these falsehoods; it was in vain that we invited the infuriated editors to a calm and dispassionate investigation of the truths which they pretended to announce: they replied by repeating their scurrility and abuse, and did not ever deign to notice charges which so deeply involved their veracity. With men of such principles, or rather, destitute of all principle, we could no longer maintain a contest. To continue to notice them, was giving them an importance of which they were unworthy, and which only served to keep alive a work that had not even ordinary talent to recommend it. Since we ceased to recognise it, we have scarcely heard the name of the *Antidote* mentioned. Nor would we have again alluded to it, had not the fact of its having once existed been brought to our recollection by the following

OBITUARY.

"The house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall stand!"
SOLOMON.

Died in this city, on Wednesday, the 7th instant, that paragon of pity, and nonpareil of fanaticism, yclept the *Antidote*; a thing engendered in the kennels of intolerance, and brought into existence in May, 1827. Its first breath twanged the trumpet of hostility to the advocates of religious freedom; and avowed its prostitution to the cause of priestcraft. From its birth it exhibited symptoms of a wretched constitution, though for a while it continued to tug the oar of controversy with a resolution that seemed to make amends for its want of sense and consistency. Say something it must, and it mattered little what with those who were prepared to receive whatever it might contain, however weak or absurd, for the utmost strength and clearness of argument. Aware of this, it bore lustily on, and weekly doled forth a pitiful rigmarole of nonsense, unequalled in the annals of inky warfare.

Justice, truth, free inquiry—all that could emancipate the mind from the shackles of priestcraft and its attendants, ignorance and superstition, were the objects of its deepest hatred and proscription. But that consummate weakness and abject servility to the *order*, were ill fitted to this region, where the people are fast breaking the clouds of religious despotism, that have so long obscured the way to truth and correct principles. It could only respire in the mephitic atmosphere of some benighted land, where the priesthood have succeeded in suppressing free inquiry, and keeping the mind of man in comparative infancy. But here, nothing could arrest it from its doom. The order, who had fondly hoped, by constant attention to keep up its vigor in spite of the most evident marks of incurable debility, were compelled to abandon it to its fate.

Its lingering and distressing death, excited the pity of those it had misrepresented and proscribed, while its former friends only paid it empty honors. In its last moments, an exiled priest cast a pitying eye on its expiring struggles, and muttered an infernal incantation for its resurrection in some more congenial region, where an enlightened people would not molest or make afraid.

But never, O mother Intolerance! never again attempt to rear your

miserable offspring this side of the Atlantic! Nurture your monstrous brood in some remote corner, where the baneful influence of the priest still fetters the people in ignorance, superstition, and fanaticism; for the clear light of our country is growing too powerful for their recreant eye. Let the distressful end of the Antidote—let its terrible spasms in the hour of dissolution alarm and terrify you; and prevent your attempting again to raise any more of your progeny in this sacred sanctuary.

I. M

Albany, May, 1828.

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY ROBERT OWEN

At a public meeting of the inhabitants of New Harmony, on Sunday, April 13, 1828.

[Concluded from page 269.]

I tried here a new course for which I was induced to hope that fifty years of political liberty had prepared the American population: that is, to govern themselves advantageously. I supplied land, houses, and the use of much capital; and I tried, each in their own way, all the different parties who collected here; but experience proved that the attempt was premature to unite a number of strangers not previously educated for the purpose, who should carry on extensive operations for their common interest and live together as a common family. I afterwards tried, before my last departure hence, what could be done by those who associated through their own choice, and in small numbers; to these I gave leases of large tracts of land for ten thousand years upon a nominal rent, and for moral conditions only; and these I did expect would have made a progress during my absence; but now, upon my return, I find that the habits of the individual system were so powerful, that these leases have been, with a few exceptions, applied for individual purposes and individual gain; and in consequence they must return again into my hands.

This last experience has made it evident that *families* trained in the individual system, founded as it is upon superstition, have not acquired those moral qualities of forbearance and charity for each other which are necessary to promote full confidence and harmony among all the members, and without which communities cannot exist. Communities, to prosper permanently, must consist of persons devoid of prejudice and possessed of moral feelings in unison with the laws of human nature.

All systems of religion train men to be prejudiced, to be without charity, and to be opposed to each other. With these qualities they never can unite as brethren of one family, having one interest and sincere kind feelings for each other.

But is the population of the world to be left in this miserable and hopeless state? If *all* we desire cannot be effected for this generation, so as to produce honesty, industry, intelligence, independence and happiness, by reason of the habits and feelings that have arisen out of their superstitious training; ought we to abandon them and their offspring to their errors and miseries? Ought we not rather to redouble our exertions to stop that evil from proceeding any farther, and never be weary

in well doing? If we cannot do all now, let us do whatever is practicable; and make as great an advance towards the right road as we can make with the means we possess.

From all I have seen since I left you I am more than ever convinced of the necessity for the change from the individual to the social system; and through some difficulties with patience and perseverance unyielding, the present generation may yet obtain many of the benefits which their children may be prepared to enjoy in comparative perfection.

To effect this change, a course must be adopted different from what I originally intended. It was my wish not to engage again in any affairs of business, but to leave all pecuniary matters to the management of others, and to make arrangements to be always at liberty to go and spread the knowledge of the principles on which the Social System is founded, far and near, that vice and misery might upon an extensive scale be the more speedily reduced. I must, however, now make some modifications of my proceedings in consequence of many parties here, during my absence, having acted in opposition to my views, and to the principles of the Social System, instead of promoting them, as they were bound to do by their promises and engagements, and as I expected they would, because it was their interest to do so.

Some of you that remained here under the individual system have complained that during my absence a monopoly has existed in some departments, which has retarded your individual success; and the neighboring communities have also complained since my return that they have been injured by it. I fear there has been some foundation for these complaints, but it is probable that these statements have been exaggerated by the over-excited feelings of the suffering parties.

It is necessary, however, now to declare distinctly, that hereafter there may be no mistake upon a subject of so much interest, that it was never my intention to establish any injurious monopoly, nor to grant such monopoly to any one: And every individual has always been, as now, at full liberty to dispose of the produce of his own labor in any way he may choose.

But, on the other hand, it was no part of my plan, by the introduction of petty stores and whiskey shops, to encourage competition which produces as many evils as monopoly, and is equally contrary to the social system. The party permitted to sell foreign produce, promised on making the engagement for the premises in which the monopoly is said to have existed, that the business should be conducted, as it had been previously managed, as much for the benefit of the town as for the proprietors.

In these respects I have been disappointed, and the business through errors of judgment has been conducted, I fear, too often more with a view to pecuniary gain of the individual proprietors, than for the mutual benefit of the surrounding population.

[Robert Owen then adverted to other occurrences which took place in his absence; but, as these are of a more local nature, it appears unnecessary to detail them. He proceeded:]

Now as the foundation of all improvements in the condition of man-

kind must be founded on principles of strict justice and honesty of purpose, and as I wish to improve the condition of my fellow-creatures, I early made these my principles of conduct, from which I have never knowingly deviated in a single instance.

I lament that any such occurrences should have taken place ; had I anticipated any such, I would have adopted more restrictive measures.

They have however occurred, and what is now best to be done ? Shall I be angry and irritated with my fellow beings, because they have been ignorant of their real interests : with the principles which I deem so true and valuable for the promotion of virtue and happiness ; would this conduct be rational in me ? I can only feel regret instead of anger ; I will, if I can, turn these errors to the benefit of all. My time has been employed for this purpose, since my return. I have been collecting all the facts that may enable me to form a correct judgment of what is now best to be done. I have not yet obtained all the facts necessary for my purpose, and that is the reason why I have not sooner met you in public. I am still fully occupied in ascertaining what can be done under the existing circumstances to secure the great object which I came here to put into practice ; and I have reason to believe that arrangements may now be formed that will promote it ; that will prepare a solid foundation for the social system, and materially benefit all who honestly desire to support it. When these arrangements shall be fully determined upon, I will again meet you and explain them, in order that all shall understand what is intended to be done.

But this much is certain, that as far as my influence can extend there shall be no injurious monopoly here ; there shall be no attempt to take advantage of any one or to do any one an injustice. These are common vulgar evils which ought not to exist, where an honest attempt is made to improve the condition of mankind.

My intention now is to form such arrangements on the estate of Harmony as will enable those who desire to promote the practice of the Social System to live in separate families on the individual system, and yet to unite their general labor or to exchange labor for labor, on the most beneficial terms for all ; or to do both or neither as their feelings or apparent interest may influence them. While other arrangements shall be formed to enable them to have their children trained from infancy in a knowledge of the principles of human nature and of the laws which govern it ; and in consequence trained in such improved habits, manners and disposition as will prepare them to adopt, with ease and pleasure, the co-operative and social system and to enjoy its innumerable advantages

By these measures I hope there will be brought around us, by degrees, an honest and industrious and also a well-educated population, with right feelings and views, who will earnestly endeavor to promote the happiness of each other and unite in bringing up their children as one family with simple manners, temperate habits, and useful knowledge, both in principles and practice.

Those who have a knowledge of human nature, who have been permitted to overcome the prejudices early forced into their minds, and who have a real affection for their fellow beings, will not be discouraged by any obstacles but will persevere to the end.

R. OWEN.

Observance of Sunday.—The following is the report of the proceedings at the trial, to which we alluded in our last:—

Fourth and Sixth Wards Court—Thursday, May 15, 1828.

Before Mr. Justice MORRILL.

Corporation of the city of New-York vs. Miles Chambers.

This case was brought by the corporation against the Defendant, for the infringement of certain ordinances, by exposing and selling articles of clothing on Sundays the 6th and 13th April last, by which he rendered himself liable to a penalty of five dollars for each offence.

By the constitution of this court, the jury, in cases under \$25, is composed of six, and the following gentlemen were accordingly sworn:

Calvin W. How, Moses Judah, Frederick Weed, Samuel Brown, Garritt Eoff, William P. Stuart.

Mr. Phenix opened the case for the prosecution. The suit was brought by the Corporation against Miles Chambers, to recover of him two several penalties for breaches of the ordinance, by which it is enacted "that no persons shall within the city of New-York, on the first day of the week, called Sunday, do any manner of servile work or labor, (works of necessity or charity excepted) or be aiding, assisting or consenting thereto; or buy, sell, or expose for sale any liquor, groceries, or *other things whatsoever*, excepting fish or milk, before nine o'clock in the morning, and milk after five o'clock in the afternoon; or shall hunt, shoot, fish, sport or play, &c. under the penalty of five dollars for each offence."

The Corporation were authorized to pass such a law, by an act of the sovereign legislature of the state of New-York, authorizing "the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonality of the City of New-York to make and pass such by-laws and ordinances as they shall from time to time deem necessary and proper, to regulate and prohibit the purchase, sale, or exposure to sale, of any goods, wares and merchandize, &c. on Sundays," &c.

There was no shadow of law to justify the defendant's proceedings. The enforcement of the present suit was sanctioned by decisions of the Supreme Court. The defendant persists in his conduct, and continues to defy the law. As moral and good men, having a regard for the general religious opinions of the country, and the authority of law, they could not sanction by their verdict the conduct of the defendant. Mr. Phenix then called

Benjamin Fuller, who deposed, that he knows the defendant, who lived in Cherry-street on the 6th and 13th April last. The defendant is a merchant tailor. Witness saw his store open on several Sundays, particularly on the 6th and 13th April—goods were exposed, as I suppose, for sale; saw no one purchase on those days.

Cross-examined.—The shop door was wide open; does not know for what object the door was open. Knows that the goods were exposed for sale from a subsequent declaration of defendant; does not know whether defendant's family lived there; defendant's clerk was behind the counter; clothes were hanging on each side of the door.

Here, the defendant's counsel, Mr. Fay, wished to infer, that because

church doors were open on Sundays, *sequitur*, that every other door might be open also.

Witness is an officer appointed by the Common Council; is street inspector for the 7th ward, and has held that office for five years.

William Jackson swore, that on Sunday, the 13th April, he bought a pair of duck trowsers at defendant's store; it was open as I went along in Cherry-street. I went in and bought the trowsers.

Cross-examined.—I purchased the goods because I wanted them.—I bought on Sunday because it was convenient for me; I have to attend to my affairs during the week days.

Stephen Ketchum stated, that he lives at 84 Cherry-street, has seen the defendant selling clothing on Sundays; saw purchasers pay money.

Cross-examined.—I am not aware that it is necessary to sell on Sundays—knows of no case wherein there can be a necessity to vend articles on the Sabbath—does not know that clothiers are accustomed to keep their stores open on Sundays.

Mr. Phenix here rested the case for the prosecution, adding, that he thought the corporation dealt very mildly with the defendant. (A disposition to hiss, was here manifested by the by-standers.)

Mr. Fay for the defendant, denied that selling a pair of breeches on Sunday was breaking the laws of God. He stated that the prosecution originated in fanaticism and superstition—in an organized system to enslave the citizens of this free country, by subjecting them to the sway of a spiritual and intolerant tyranny. He declared the proceeding a breach of moral principle, and an unhingement of Reason. It was the duty of the defendant to sell clothes every day, because by so doing, he could best support a large family. In this, there was no violation of law; it was a work of *necessity*; and its prohibition was unconstitutional. The Corporation could not divest nature of its wants and necessities; it could not pretend to enact that a person should not want clothes on Sundays, or if he did, that he must walk naked till Monday. If a person lost his hat in a dock, might he not go to a hatter's, and furnish himself with a new one, even though the day was Sunday. The Corporation, and its Attorney, the Judges, Jury, and neighbors, were no judges of necessity; a person must be his own judge in such a contingency; on that plea, his client rested his defence. God gave man time, and he had a right to employ it as he pleased. If defendant was obliged to shut up on a Sunday, he was deprived of the means of subsistence. The defendant was persecuted because he chose to be industrious when gentlemen were idle, and certainly the defendant was the honestest of the two. The prohibitory ordinance was absurd and repugnant to common sense, consequently it was of no effect. There was nothing wicked in selling breeches; the bible might forbid it, but the defendant is no christian; he is a moral philosopher; and believes that all religions are false, fraudulent, dangerous and superstitious.

[A Juror here asked the court if he was obliged to have his ears shocked by such blasphemy.—Court. Yes, Sir.]

Mr. F. continued: There are two societies, and one press in New-York, for the propagation of liberal principles. The Free Press Association—The Society of Free Enquirers—and The *Correspondent*. It

was at these that the prosecution was aimed—it was of these that the fanatics were afraid. There is a formidable party in New-York, and in the United States, who call themselves an Evangelical party, and who want a Presbyterian Pope. The pulpits are filled with them—they hate these associations, because they fear them, and because these societies are pure—are intended for free discussion and to open the eyes of the multitude; the fanatics wish to ruin every person who is a member of them. Hence comes the prosecution of the defendant—But prosecution is in vain—the sacred principles of toleration, and the essence of liberty is involved in the present question. The Legislature and Corporation had no right to enact such laws—the law of nature is the law of man; and this corporation ordinance is opposed to the law of nature, and the constitution of the United States. The defendant came to this country to avoid tyrants, fanatics, and bigots. Mr. *Fay* then commenced reading a pamphlet, which he stated had been drawn up by a legal gentleman, now at the head of one of the monied institutions of this city, who formerly presided on the bench, and who had intended to give the substance of the work, as his charge to a jury in the event of a similar case having ever been brought before him.

The Court stated that this would be no authority—the Court could not listen to books—the Counsel might read it as his own opinion if he pleased, but not with the sanction of authority. They could listen to nothing here but adjudicated cases—the opinion of individuals not clothed with legal experience and authority were of no avail.

Mr. *Fay* proceeded to read the pamphlet in question. It is entitled “The People’s Rights Reclaimed: being An Exposition of the Unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New-York, *Compelling* the Observance of a Religious Sabbath Day.”

Mr. *Fay* having read a few pages of this work, by which it appeared that the writer was a strenuous advocate of the rights of toleration, the Court again interposed, and declared that it could not listen to anonymous remarks—there was no coming to the main and simple subject of dispute by such a proceeding as the learned gentleman had adopted.

Abraham Collins, was then called on behalf of the defendant. Witness is a tailor; does not keep a shop now; but did formerly; always sold on Sundays; it is a custom; cannot say if it was necessary for the defendant to sell on Sunday; witness used to keep open until 12 at noon, and would have done so longer, only people would not come. Sunday is the best day for selling; most goods are sold on Sunday.

Cross-examined. Witness is a Jew; always keeps his Sabbath; shuts up once a week, on the day prescribed by his law; believes in his own religion.

Mr. *Phenix* then read to the Jury the law of the state, and the ordinance of the corporation cited above. Also, the second section of the act for the suppression of immorality. (Laws, vol. 2. 194.) and an extract from 8 Johnson, 290; being the opinion of Chancellor Kent in *The People vs. Ruggles*.

Mr. *Fay* said that the decisions of Chancellor Kent, when opposed to the spirit of the constitution, were worth nothing. The law, as laid down by Kent, was certainly the law of the land; but it is against the spirit of the constitution. The witness who bought, consulted his convenience—he bought because it suited him. The witness,

Collins, stated, that Sunday was the best day for selling; and it was a strong argument for the necessity of the case, that the defendant had a large family, and could not be expected to be idle on the day best adapted to his business.

Mr. Phenix said that it was a maxim, that the convenience of the minority must yield to that of the majority. The societies alluded to by the defendant's counsel were calculated to occasion breaches of the peace; and one individual had no right to shock even the prejudices of a whole community. He rejoiced that the defendant was a foreigner, and that it was a stranger who had the effrontery to declare his intention of endeavoring to subvert our laws. The Law of Moses, "keep holy the Sabbath," had been observed from time immemorial; and the attempt of the defendant was calculated, in its results, to disorganize society. It was revolting to the prevailing religious feelings of this moral country—but the charter of the "Free Press" would find itself controlled by the charter of the laws. The Common Council was authorized to pass the ordinance by the sovereign legislature. The gentleman defined acts of necessity as those acts, the refraining from which would be injurious and hurtful to our fellow creature, and as deeds of positive and imperious necessity. But the conduct of the defendant did not come within this exception. If a person is found naked in the street, the Police would take care of him. The gentleman did not appeal to the Jury as Christians, but as citizens, as men of morality, as guardians of the laws, and as fathers of families. His large family is no excuse for the defendant, but rather an argument against him—the welfare of his children should have taught him an observance of moral and religious sentiments. The *dictum* of Chancellor Kent, which the defendant's counsel disputed, was alike an honor to the head and heart of that excellent man, to his judgment and his piety.

Mr. Justice Morrill. The present action was brought to recover certain penalties for a breach of the ordinance of the Corporation. The point for the Jury's consideration was, did the defendant sell on the 6th and 13th of April last, which days were Sundays, and whether such selling was against law. The Legislature gave the Corporation power to enact laws for the better government of the city; and the Corporation undoubtedly is sanctioned by law in passing these regulations. The defendant raises two objections; firstly, that it is a work of necessity, and is excepted thereby from the penalty; this point it remained for the Jury to decide. The defendant's second objection was, that he is not bound to regard the Sabbath, and that he is exempt from the penalty as he must support his family. But there is no legal proof that is contrary to his conscience and belief. The defendant has not proved himself a Jew, who are alone freed from the obligation. The Government of the United States is the most liberal of all Governments; but principles of law must be maintained, and public morality protected. The common law of England, when not abrogated by positive enactment in this country, is the law of the land; and such being the case, the conduct of defendant was in direct violation of it. A person may profess whatever faith he pleases, but one day must be observed. The Christian keeps his Sunday, and the Jew his peculiar day, although the law cannot force individuals to go to places of worship.

The Jury returned a verdict for the plaintiffs—damages \$10.

We have placed the preceding report on record, that our readers may be apprized of the measures pursuing by the Evangelical cabal to subjugate this country to a puritanical despotism. Our limits prevent us from offering any remarks this week on the subject: but we shall not lose sight of it.

Meanwhile, we have to state, that at a public meeting held in the Bethel Academy on Sunday evening last, which was numerously and respectfully attended, a resolution was unanimously adopted in favor of appealing to the Supreme Court against the above decision, and of petitioning the Legislature to repeal the law under which it was given. A Committee of Five was also appointed to superintend the proceedings, and to open and receive subscriptions to defray all necessary expenses.

Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-Street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 25th instant, at half past ten o'clock, forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The CORRESPONDENT is now published at 422 Broadway, by Geo. Houston & Co. Terms—\$3 per annum in advance. The first four numbers having been reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 19.

NEW-YORK, MAY 31, 1828.

Vol. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS.

MR. EDITOR—Paley, the great champion of the truth of Christianity, remarks, that “to her belong frankness, and the simplicity of conscious greatness—and whether she grapple with the pride of philosophy, or stand in fronted opposition to the prejudices of the multitude, she does it on her own strength, and spurns all the props and all the auxiliaries of superstition away from her.” If this sentence means any thing, it must signify that Christianity is a summary of her own doctrines, and of the *means* to teach them.

Whenever, therefore, we hear of theological seminaries, of bible, and tract, and missionary societies, unless the sacred books of the Christians directly authorize these, we are warranted to conclude, on the principles laid down by Paley, that they are the inventions, schemes, contrivances, and artifices of men—mere human devices—and that they who support them have some other object in view than teaching Christianity.

Two main articles of the bible theology are, that no man can say that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Spirit—and that the *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned. The knowledge, then, of the truth and of the power of scripture interpretation, are the gifts only of the Spirit. When, therefore, we hear of a theological seminary undertaking to *manufacture* ministers of the gospel, as any mechanic manufactures articles of his own trade; using as means, creeds, catechisms, expositions, and commentaries, instead of the bible, we are certain that the Institution, so far from having the countenance or support of those writings which form the basis of Christianity, runs counter to them, because, to use the language of these writings, all such institutions “teach for doctrines the commandments of men.” In like manner, if there is nothing in the bible that enjoins or favors bible and tract, and missionary societies, we must regard them as “human devices.”

Now I have never been able to discover a single passage in the bible which in the most distant manner countenances these institutions. The fact is, they are a modern invention, entirely unknown to antiquity. In the early ages of Christianity, there were no legally incorporated societies of any sort—no societies having for their combined object the prosecution of particular enterprizes. Men first of all combined for mercantile purposes, and afterwards for other projects. As during the time in which the bible was written, there were no associations for particular purposes, or projects of enterprize—and particularly none for *religious* objects, other than the general associated body of Christians,

called the church, it is evident that there could not be a word in the bible predicated on associations of the nature of those in our times called theological, or bible, mission, and tract societies. Unknown as they were to what are called "gospel times," it was impossible that the gospels should say any thing regarding them. They are therefore wholly unauthorized by the scriptures—they are the mere creatures of speculation.

The main object of all these societies is to obtain money by begging for it. But does the bible authorize begging in this way? If it never recognized the associations themselves, it cannot authorize any part of their proceedings. The public begging practised by these societies, is, therefore, utterly destitute of all scriptural sanction. To *beg*, is to ask alms; but to solicit charity for pretended gospel purposes, unless warranted by the gospel, is to act in the teeth of the gospel. No charity, but that which relieves personal wants is enjoined in the New Testament. According to that book, the apostles and primitive Christians never dreamt of requesting either personal or public contributions, the avails of which were to create funds—to be converted into stock, with which to purchase houses and lands—to pay a host of salary head and subordinate officers—to pay presidents and vice presidents of societies—and a multitude of vagrant beggars, for their services in running through the country to beg for these societies. This is wholly a modern scheme—altogether ascribable to the genius of the present times, and not at all to the genius of the sacred books of the Christians, which recognise nothing of speculating schemes and projects. It is a device, the real object of which is to *get money*. The *ostensible* purpose is to further the interests of religion—but it is a mode which religion no where commands, countenances, or supports.

"But," say the friends of religion, "the gospel is to be propagated." Granted—But this surely is not to be done by means not authorized by the gospel, but by such means as it prescribes, and by those only. How wonderfully self righteousness blends and incorporates itself with the projects of the Christian world, as distinct from the injunctions of the New Testament! That book knows nothing of the self righteous show and parade, in the way of exacting contributions to further modern proselyting schemes—in which three quarters of the money is stopped by the way as gratuities to hirelings.

It appears from the annual report of what is called the "American Tract Society," (who have built an immense depository in Nassau-street, which cost \$25,000) that during the year ending the 9th of May, 1827, no less a sum than \$30,441 93 was paid for the printing of tracts; including the benevolent and disinterested services of officers and travelling agents; which two last items, that is, of benevolence and disinterestedness, swallow up \$3,192 02; or more than one tenth of the whole sum. If people ought to be more valued, as is generally the case, for the money they expend than for the good they do, then has the "American Tract Society" done an immense *service* to the community—for they have expended during one year (*excepting what they have pocketed themselves*) the enormous sum of \$30,441 93!

But let us examine the subject a little more closely, and we shall find that this Society, instead of having performed a meritorious deed, has actually squandered this money for a purpose highly injurious to society, inasmuch as its application is calculated to perpetuate ignorance, mental slavery, vice, and misery.

The question very naturally arises here, Of whom is the "American Tract Society" composed?

On looking at the list of members, we find that they consist of the richest and most influential persons in society—a long string of Honorables, Esquires, Reverends, and merchants. The poor, who have but little money, being under the necessity of presenting their mites to the New-York institution through the medium of agents or auxiliary societies, have the misfortune not to be members; and, of course, like other great institutions it is composed of great men.

But how are the funds collected? Why there are hundreds, perhaps thousands of persons, belonging to this society, worth from \$10,000 to two or three millions each. Besides, there is a great body of clergymen among the number, who receive from their hearers salaries of from one to ten thousand dollars annually; besides many other perquisites. The collection of funds is then at once accounted for. How easy for such a body of men to make up even a hundred thousand dollars, and scarcely know they have given any thing. Such, at least, would be the inference of any one unacquainted with the subject, on perusing such a long list of Honorables, Esquires, and Reverends, as that composing the members of the "American Tract Society." But here they will find themselves egregiously mistaken. The object of these men, is not to *pay* money, but to be known by what they call acts of benevolence, as lovers of God, and especially of religion; and to make themselves celebrated in the annals of the church, as being very liberal of—other people's money. Of this sum of \$30,000, about \$14,000 appears to have found its way into the treasury, in the form of donations, and sums paid as fees for memberships and dictatorships. Of these fees, however, more than \$4000 were made up by contributions from Churches, Auxiliary Tract Societies, and (mostly) by ladies, as presents to their ministers; of whom we recognise several, with salaries of from \$1500 to \$3500 per annum. Thus the sum paid into the treasury of the Tract Society, by all its great, and noble, and honorable, and Reverend members, is about \$10,000, or only one third of the whole. And this, I presume, is the last payment *they* will make, except it may be a three or five dollar note once in a year or two; for they have purchased their memberships and dictatorships, and paid for them; and they are not, generally, that class of people who are fond of paying money when there is no demand for it.

But how is the balance of the \$30,000 to be collected? In this the society displays its greatness. Fearing the people would be offended were they not allowed to give their money in aid of the great work, they generously extend the privilege of making it up to Auxiliary Societies, Mite Societies, Cent Societies, Gleaning Societies, and Praying Societies; to poor men with large families, and nothing but their hands to support them with; to widowed women, who have children

without shoes and stockings; to poor young women, who have nothing but a gold ring or some other favorite trinket that they can part with.

But there are many, whose *modesty* leads them to *decline* the proffered honor, and to withhold their money. To remove this *trifling* difficulty, a certain species of runners, called "travelling agents," who are dispatched by the great society, to travel through the country, have the *unspeakable condescension* to wait on the people at their respective places of abode, to remove all scruples respecting the *honor* intended them, and to receive the money at their own hands. If some from actual poverty, seem willing to be satisfied with the presentation of small sums, the agents never fail to assure them, that the Society is *great*, the object *great*, the requisite sum of money *great*, it being absolutely indefinite, and to consist of all they *can get*; that, therefore, they need be under no apprehension of depriving others of the privilege and the honor of giving; for if the money can be expended in no other manner, more Society Houses can be erected in New-York and elsewhere; more Tract Depositories established; more than twenty (the present number of) Presidents and Vice Presidents appointed; more Corresponding Secretaries, Treasurers, and stationary and travelling agents, all of whom combined, will very soon find uses for all the money that can be obtained.

To those who have the money, the Society *condescend* to extend the privilege of availing themselves of the honor of becoming "Donors," even by the money procured by cultivating potatoe fields, corn fields, or any other field, on land furnished by some rich church member, with the generous motive of aiding the operations of the mammoth society, at the serious expense and great risk of having some of his poor barren fields cleared of rubbish, enriched, and brought into a state of cultivation; while the families that perform the work are actually in want of the crops they raise to appease the cravings of hunger. Others have the privilege of going without shoes in summer, and of wearing the coarsest clothes—of dispensing with the use of sugar, tea, and any other of the little comforts and conveniences of life that have hitherto sweetened the toils and labors of the day. Females may sew, knit, plait straw, sell their rings, necklaces, chains, &c., all to enjoy the high privilege and honor of giving to the great society. True—the families of some of these poor men have sometimes to endure cold and hunger, and those who sew and knit, and give up their rings, have very little—often nothing—either to sew or knit for themselves. But it matters not;—there is a *great* object in view—*great* honor attends it, to say nothing of the good—*great* sums of money are necessary—and what the rich *will not give*, the poor *must*.

VERITAS.

[To be continued.]

THE HISTORY OF THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.

[Continued from page 267.]

David being made acquainted, according to agreement, with the king's disposition towards him, retired to Abimalech, the high priest, at the city of Nob, (1 Sam. xxi. 5.) who treated him with shew-bread, and

armed him with the sword of Goliath ; which had been hung up and consecrated to God. (v. 9.) Josephus.

We may consider David's resuming this sword, after its dedication as a religious trophy, to be a manifestation of hostile intentions, or a declaration of war against Saul ; for which he now took the first opportunity to prepare. Thus accoutred, he fled out of Judea, to Achish, king of Gath, (v. 10.) intending, as we have good reason to believe, to enter into a treaty of alliance with him against the Hebrews ; but the popular cry was against him before he accomplished any thing ; or at least any thing that has reached our times. Here David appears to disadvantage ; for though his carrying with him the sword of Goliath, was artful enough, since it was a continual witness of that prowess, which had gained him such extraordinary reputation ; yet for him upon this occasion to throw himself into the power of the Philistines, from whose champion he had ravished that sword, was the highest imprudence ; and yet we perceive he had like to have suffered for it, had he not made use of a stratagem to procure his release, which he effected by acting the madman. (v. 13.) Mankind seem to have been very easily imposed on in those days !

David, thinking it now time to avow his design of disputing the crown with Saul openly, went to a cave, called Adullam ; which he appointed a place of rendezvous for his partizans. Here we are told he collected together a company of debtors, vagrants, and disaffected persons, to the number of four hundred ; and opened his rebellion by heading this party of banditti. (1 Sam. xxii. 2.) Hither also came to him his father and all his brethren ; and the first movement that he made, was to go to the king of Moab, to desire a retreat for his father and mother, until he knew the event of his enterprize. (v. 3.)

By the advice of the prophet Gad, David next marched into the land of Judah. (v. 5.) Gad, no doubt, hoped, that as the young adventurer was of that tribe, he would there meet with considerable reinforcements. When Saul first heard of this insurrection, he pathetically laments his misfortune to those about him, that they, and even his son Jonathan, should conspire against him. (v. 7, 8.) Then started up one Doeg, an Edomite, who informed Saul, that he had seen David harbored by the priests in Nob. (v. 9.) Upon this Saul summoned all those belonging to that city before him, with Abimelech their chief, who began to excuse himself as well as he could ; but Saul remembering, without doubt, the threatening of Samuel, concerning the affair of king Agag, (1 Sam. xv.) and considering these priests as the traitors whom he sought, he commanded them all to be slain, to the number of eighty-five persons. (ch. xxii. 16, 17, 18.) Moreover, agreeably to the barbarity of that people, the massacre included the whole city of Nob, man and beast, young and old, without exception. (v. 19.)

Though the king's rage in this instance exceeded not on y the bounds of humanity, but also of good policy, it nevertheless serves to shew how deeply the priests were concerned in the rebellion of David ; and shews also that Saul had not so great an opinion of their holiness, as we, at this distance of time, from their own annals, might be led to entertain. Had Saul been more tractable, he might have enjoyed the name of

king, have continued the dupe of the priests, have died in peace, and his children have succeeded quietly to the same inheritance after him. But

Ye gods! what havoc does ambition make
Among your works!—

During this time David rescued the city of Keilah from the Philistines, (1 Sam. xxiii. 3.) who were besieging it, hoping to make it a garrison for himself. But upon the approach of Saul, not thinking himself able to maintain it, being as yet but six hundred strong; and not choosing to confide in the inhabitants, he abandoned it, and retired to the wilderness. (1 Sam. xxiii. 13.) Hither Jonathan came privately to see him, and piously engages in the cause against his own father, by covenant; in which it was agreed, that if David succeeded, of which Jonathan is very confident, he was to be a partaker (v. 16, 17, 18.) of his good fortune; but as Jonathan was not to join him openly, he went home again.

Saul having received intelligence of David's retreats, pursued him from place to place; but was called off by news of an invasion of the land by the Philistines; (v. 27.) whether of David's procuring or not we are uncertain. After repelling the invaders, he however returned to the wilderness of En-gedi, in pursuit of David, with three thousand chosen men. Here we are told of an odd adventure which put the life of Saul strangely into the power of David. He turned in to repose himself alone, in a cave, wherein at that very time David and his myrmidons were secreted. (1 Sam. xxiv. 3.) This, one would imagine to have been a fine opportunity for him to have given a finishing stroke to his fortune, by killing Saul, and jumping into the throne at once. But David knew better what he was about, than to act so rashly. He could entertain no hopes that the Jews would receive for their king, a man who should imbrue his hands in the blood of the Lord's anointed. He therefore only privately cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, (v. 4.) and suffered him to depart in peace. When the king was gone out from the cave, David calls after him, and artfully makes a merit of his forbearance, protesting an innocency, to which his being in arms was, however, a flat contradiction. Saul freely and gratefully acknowledges himself indebted to him for his life, and seems so well convinced of David's strength and his own weakness, that he candidly confesses it; only tying him down by oath, (v. 21.) not to destroy his children after him; an obligation which, in due time, we shall see how well David remembered and fulfilled.

Saul must certainly have strayed very far from his men, to have let David catch him at so great a disadvantage; a conduct not usual with good generals. That such must have been the case, is however evident, while we credit the relation; since the meanness of Saul's reply to David's harangue, can be no otherwise accounted for. Saul does not appear to have wanted resolution on other occasions; but to acknowledge his assurance that David would obtain the sovereignty, and poorly to intreat a fugitive rebel in behalf of his family, is a conduct not even to be palliated, but upon the foregoing supposition. We must either condemn the general or the king; neither of which characters appear with extraordinary lustre upon this occasion. David, on the other hand,

dissembles admirably here; pretending to Saul a great reverence for the Lord's anointed; though conscious at the same time that he himself was also the Lord's anointed; and anointed purposely to supersede the other Lord's anointed; and moreover, was at this very time aiming to put his election in force! But as the people were not of his council, and he knew their great regard for religious sanctions, it was certainly prudent in him to set an example of piety, in an instance, of which he hoped, in time, to reap the benefit himself. About this time Samuel died. (1 Sam. xxv. 1.)

We next find our young adventurer acting the chief character in a tragi-comedy, which will farther display his title to the appellation of being the man after God's own heart.

There dwelt then at Maon, a blunt, rich old farmer, whose name was Nabal. David hearing of him, and that he was at that time sheep shearing, sent ten of his followers to levy a contribution upon him, (v. 5. 9.) making a merit of his forbearance in that he had not stolen his sheep, and murdered his shepherds. Nabal, who, to be sure, was not the most courteous man in the world, upon receiving this extraordinary message, gave them but a so so answer, attended with a flat denial. Who, says he, is David? and who is the son of Jesse? There be many servants now-a-days that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men whom I know not whence they be? (v. 10, 11.) Upon receiving this answer, David directly formed his resolution; and arming himself with a number of his followers, vowed to butcher him and all that belonged to him, before the next morning. (v. 13. 34.) And how was this pious intention diverted? Why, Abigail, the charming Abigail, Nabal's wife, resolved, unknown to her spouse, to try the force of beauty in mollifying our angry hero; whose disposition for gallantry and warm regard for the fair sex, was, probably, not unknown at that time. Accordingly, she prepares a present, and goes to David, saying very sententiously, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be: (v. 24.) judging very humanely, that could she get him to transfer his revenge upon her, she might possibly contrive to pacify him, without proceeding to disagreeable extremities. Nor was she wrong in her judgment; for we are told—So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, go up in peace to thine house; see I have hearkened to thy voice, *and have accepted thy person.* (1 Sam. xxv. 35.) But whatever pleasure Abigail might have had, we do not find that Nabal was so well pleased with the convention his wife had made for him; for when he came to understand so much of the story as she chose to inform him of, he guessed the remainder, broke his heart, and died in ten days afterwards. (x. 37, 38.) David loses no time, but returns God thanks for the old fellow's death, and then marries the buxom widow, together with Ahinoam, a Jezreelite. For Saul had disposed of his daughter Michal to another.

We are now told another story strongly resembling that of the cave at En-gedi. Saul again pursued David with three thousand chosen men; again fell into his hands during his sleep, only that here David stole upon him in his own camp; he ran away with the king's spear and

bottle of water; and Saul went back again as wise as he came. (1 Sam. xxvi.)

I own that I subscribe to the opinion of Mons. Bayle, who looks upon this but as another detail of the adventure at En-gedi: and that, for much the same reasons. For upon a comparison of both, as laid down in the 23d, 24th and 26th chapters of 1 Samuel, we may remark:

I. That in each story, the Ziphites give Saul intelligence of the place where David harbored.

II. That in each story David comes upon Sand in much the same manner, withholds his people from killing him, and contents himself with taking away a testimonial of the king's having been in his power.

III. That in the second account, when David is pleading the injustice of Saul's persecuting him, as he terms it, he does not represent to him that this was the second time of his sparing him, when he had his life so entirely in his power! and that Saul's pursuing him this second time, was a flagrant instance of ingratitude after what had happened on the former occasion.

IV. That in the second relation, Saul, when he acknowledges David's forbearance and mercy to him in the present instance, makes no mention of any former obligation of this kind; although it was so recent.

V. That the historian, who evidently intends to blacken the character of Saul, and whiten that of David; does not make the least observation himself, in the second narrative, of reference to the first.

These reasons prove unanswerably that we are furnished with two relations of the same adventure. To account for this double record, and their variations, must be left to commentators, connectors, and harmonizers, who are used to compromise affairs of this nature.

David finding, that, with his present strength, he was not able to maintain any footing in Judea, puts himself once more under the protection of Achish, king of Gath. (1 Sam. xxvii. 1, 2, 3.) Achish, who does not appear to have been a very powerful prince, seems to consider David alone, and David at the head of six hundred desperadoes, as two very different persons; for he now assigns him a place named Ziklag, for a habitation, where he remained a year and four months. (v. 6, 7.)

As he had now a quiet residence, a person who entertains a great opinion of David's sanctity, would be apt to suppose he would confine himself to agriculture, composing psalms, and singing them to his harp; but David found employment more suitable to his genius. I should be very sorry to insinuate, that he did not sing psalms at leisure times; but his more important business was to lead his men out to plunder the adjacent country. We have the names of some nations, as they are called, but which must have been small distinct communities, like the present camps of wandering Asiatics, among whom he carried his depredations; these are the Geshurites, the Gezrites, and the Amalekites. (v. 8.) Of these people he made a total massacre, at those places where he made his inroads; saying, Lest they should tell of us, saying, so did David, and so will be his manner, all the while he dwelleth in the country of the Philistines. (v. 9. 11.) After thus prudently endeavoring to secure his robberies from detection, he brings his booty

home, which consisted of all which those miserable beings possessed. He made presents of this, to his benefactor, king Achish, (Josephus) who, demanding where he had made his incursion, was answered, against the south of Judah, &c. (1 Sam. xxvii. 10.) intending by this falsity to insinuate to the king, his aversion to his own countrymen and attachment to him. And Achish believed David, saying, he hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant for ever. (v. 12.) [To be continued.]

LIBERALITY OF SENTIMENT.

MR. EDITOR—Liberality of sentiment is the greatest ornament of man; it embellishes all his other good qualities, and makes them shine with double lustre; it softens all the harshness arising from difference of opinion; it lessens the frequency of private quarrels, and makes the Jew, the Christian, and the Deist, live at peace with each other. This amiable quality, though occasionally possessed by the first teachers of Christianity, has, in very few instances, ever belonged to any description of Christians since their times; for the sentiments of intolerance are early to be found in the writings of the fathers; and there is no established religion which does not condemn to eternal punishment all those who refuse to believe what the church enjoins. The liberality of true philosophy is unrestrained by the narrow creed of opinions merely speculative, and estimates every man's merit by his conduct, judging the great end of philosophy to consist in utility. But all mankind are not philosophers; for with most men, violence is the test of sincerity; and to be liberal is but another name for being indifferent. Such, however, have yet to learn, that sincerity in opinions is to be shewn only by actions, and that belief is a personal affair. What I should believe, no man has a right to dictate or inquire: what I do, concerns others only so far as it may affect their interest. To be liberal is only a virtue, because the perversity of the world has sanctioned the contrary; it is strictly that which every man has a right to expect, because no one has a right to say to another, "You ought to believe what I believe;" for belief should proceed from conviction, and conviction is not at every man's command.

Liberality, though not inconsistent with a belief of our own, forbears to interfere with the faith or the hopes of another; and all attempts to dictate to others are violations of that pure spirit of philosophy, whose only weapons of conversion are advice and argument; whereas the instruments of persecution are various, keen and cruel; for though (thanks to the temper of the times) those coarse correctors of heresy, the gibbet and the stake, are now out of fashion, yet the ingenuity of power has invented other methods of enforcing silence or belief, not quite so effectual, but more painful to the mind of the sufferer. The force of parental authority, the power of situation, the influence of riches, on the hopes and expectations, the feelings and passions of men, have all been exerted to effect that similarity of belief in things indifferent, which, were it obtained, could be of no advantage to any of the parties concerned.

The generality of the world are ignorant, illiberal, and little qualified to judge of speculative opinions. If a man thinks for himself, and ventures to speak his sentiments, they harshly and hastily condemn him, without being able to enter into his motives. But they are much kinder to each other; for so long as a man does not pretend to give a reason for what he does, they suffer him to enjoy his ignorance in quiet, and leave him to do as he pleases: but to him who professes any singularity of opinion, they cry out "Heretic! Infidel! Atheist!" and treat him with every species of insult and contempt. The strongest argument for religious liberality, and mutual toleration, is the great diversity of revealed religions throughout the world, and the confidence with which they are believed by their different adherents. They cannot all be true; and as they all exclude each other from the favor of heaven, it is much more reasonable to suppose that they are all false: to believe otherwise, is to make God the author of injustice and cruelty, by condemning men to eternal punishment for disbelief in what, from their education and prejudices, they never had the means of knowing. To suppose that he regards them all with an equal eye of benevolence, as so many attempts to gain his favor, is liberal and consistent, and in this light they are all for him; but to suppose that he has revealed one and punishes all the rest, is to make him partial, cruel, and unjust. Let each man then endeavor to please his Maker, by loving his fellow creatures, and whatever be his religion, whether Deism, Mahometanism, or Christianity, it will do no harm, and may do good; but whoever persecutes, hates, or oppresses those of different opinions from himself, his religion cannot be from Heaven, because it disturbs the peace of society. B.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 31, 1828.

Liberal Publications.—We have received since our last the first number of "*The March of Mind*," published semi-monthly at Cincinnati, Ohio, and "devoted principally to the two great subjects of *Theology* and *Politics*." We have also received the first number of "*Priestcraft Exposed*;" a monthly journal, established at Lockport; the object of which is decidedly and avowedly to counteract the anti-liberal arts and doings of priestcraft."

"*The March of Mind*" is published at \$2, and "*Priestcraft Exposed*" at \$1 per annum, payable at subscribing.

Convinced from long observation and experience that the press is the most powerful engine that can be employed against superstition, we hail with pleasure the appearance of the above journals; and from the indications now evident in almost every part of the Union, of a determination to crouch no longer under priestly thralldom, we entertain no doubt of their commanding a liberal patronage. That our readers may judge of the respective merits of these publications, we subjoin the following extracts; and it will give us pleasure to forward to the publishers of either paper, or of both, the names of those handed us, who may be desirous of aiding the editors in their magnanimous attempt to eman-

cipate the human race from mental bondage. In a spirited address to the public, the editors of "Priestcraft Exposed," remark:—

"It is apparent from orthodox prints, that an extensive and powerful combination is already founded in the United States, the ultimate object of which, can be no less than to controul liberty of conscience and freedom of discussion, and for *this service* get paid out of the national treasury, or in other words to establish a "national religion."

"Liberty of conscience and freedom of discussion, though guaranteed to Americans to the fullest extent, may yet feel the galling chains of ecclesiastical tyranny. And how can this be brought about? Suffer the "Rev. the Clergy" to pursue their covert plans without opposition for thirty-years, and in whose hands will our liberties then be? Suffer them to manufacture and let loose upon us 40,000 educated Calvinistic priests, (their estimate for the year 1850,) and these supported by the generation that are growing up, "*with their sentiments*," and with what ease will they put their fingers on the wealth and liberty of this nation. The people of this country are not yet prepared to support BY LAW an *ecclesiastical establishment*, and notwithstanding the anxiety and "prayers" of the "regularly ordained," this *grand desideratum* which has so long danced before their imaginations, was likely to pass off like a vision of the night—and hence the necessity of a deep, extensive, and perhaps the best organized plan that ever was in the world to make their ends meet.

"Look at what is going on even in our own section of the country. See every exertion to raise money under the mask of some name that will *disguise the real object*,—even "*for the Lord's treasury!*" These plans *without exception*, are warmly advocated from the pulpit and the press—when, with little trouble, the dollars and cents so *disinterestedly* and *piously* gathered into the "*Lord's treasury*" can be traced to the *tables and backs* of the very beggars, or some of their clan, who pay the debt by begging again! Is the immense amount begged annually, in the name of the "poor perishing heathen" given to them? Nay, it is expended at the rate of from \$500, to \$3000 per annum, on *poor, despised, and persecuted missionaries!* Are not the "heathen" *laid under contribution* as soon as these missionaries get a foot hold among them? Look at the missionary journals for the amount *plundered* from the Sandwich Islanders—or a little nearer home, from our own Indians.

"The Christian religion has been made a mask under which the most barefaced robberies and cruelties, have, for ages been committed by an *organized corps*—falsely called gospel ministers—but truly priests! The crimes of these men, their murders and persecutions, have all been done in the *name of religion*, and to *support the gospel!*

"In countries where their works are consummated, what do we see but an innumerable body of drones, rioting on the hard earnings *forcibly* taken from the honest husbandman! Their creeds, their systems, and their craft, supported by the bayonets of tyrants! And is this primitive christianity? Is this the religion introduced by the holy Jesus, who was ushered into the world by a heavenly choir singing "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will to men!"

"Look at Great Britain, the most favored country of Europe! Behold upwards of \$40,000,000 annually wrenched from the hand of virtuous industry, to support vice, idleness and priestcraft! To support the very robbers who rob! Is this a specimen of the GOOD WILL TO MAN introduced by the Gospel? Do American priests disclaim all connexion with the wickedness of the English clergy? Why then are they aiming at the same "*christian perfection*?" Why be connected with the English Bible, Missionary, and Jew Converting Societies; these mammoth congregations for robbery? Why publish the doings of these robber bands, as sustainers of the christian religion, when their actions are so deadly opposed to all religion and justice!

"Our feeble efforts shall be devoted to the holy cause of exposing these virtual *deniers of christianity* and advancing religious inquiry—of promoting practical religion and sound morality. The limits of our work will not admit of an exposure of all the frauds practised in the various departments of priestcraft; indeed, it would hardly serve as an index; yet, we shall hold up for public detestation a few of these "*pious frauds*" as they pass along.

"Let it be remembered that we do not attack individual character—nor *practical religion*—it is the rotten system by which priestcraft is supported that we grapple with. Concise communications establishing or controverting this holy undertaking, shall have a place in our columns, "that all may hear the arguments on each side, and error, wherever it is, or however secreted, may be brought to shame, and *truth*, however despised or neglected, be finally triumphant." Let that haggard *superstition*, which has so long stalked fearlessly abroad in the land, be driven by the piercing eye of *reason* to her loathsome cave, and there, despoiled of her power to harm, be left to languish and expire alone."

It would appear that the *title* of the journal "*Priestcraft Exposed*," had given great offence to the pious fraternity, and that they had expressed their "*holy ire*" by revilings, scoffings and false assertions, the usual weapons resorted to by the priesthood when defeated by fair argument. But the editors, no way intimidated by the vituperations of these fanatics, boldly declare that they "*despise a soft and deceitful name, under which to beguile the simple—the discerning are not to be entrapped by a false and suspicious "cognomen"—and where then is the benefit of hoisting false colors? Are not the clergy continually charging the friends of liberal discussion, with selecting names not indicative of the character of their works? Our greatest anxiety is, that we may do nothing dishonorable to the holy cause we have espoused—the enfranchisement of man from the fangs of Priestcraft and irreligion. To the furtherance of this desirable object, we pledge ourselves to apply a portion of the proceeds of "*Priestcraft Exposed*," in publishing and circulating such *Tracts*, as will have a tendency to open the eyes of the world, and counteract the anti-christian and anti-liberal acts and doings of Priestcraft.*"

The following, from the same paper, is an excellent hit at the projectors of the "*Orthodox* line of stages and steamboats:—

"PIONEER STAGE RUNNERS."

"*Strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.*"—This passage is most forcibly brought to mind when we see individuals ransacking the country to get stock taken up for the purpose of establishing a line of Stages that shall not run on the first day of the week. These identical strain-ers, when at home sell sufficient *Whiskey, Rum, and Brandy*, every week to spread death and desolation among multitudes of their fellow creatures—"heirs of immortality."—They see clearly the "mote in their brother's eye, but the "beam" in their own is wholly overlooked. Will posterity believe, that in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, individuals who took so much pains to prevent travelling on one day in the week, felt so anxious that the Jewish Decalogue should not be violated, and that travellers should drink nothing but *Hot Coffee*, were the other six days of the week actually engaged in peddling a *Poison* whose baleful influence is felt and acknowledged from one end of the Union to the other! Yet such is the fact. Stand forth ye champions of priestcraft, and let the world behold your shame! Is this according to the precepts of Christianity—"Love thy neighbor as thyself"—to deal out a liquid that you know is good for nothing to the purchaser—yea, worse than poison to him! Truly was it said "ye strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."

— From the March of Mind.

Mental Independence.—A question may arise in the minds of some, Why declare Mental Independence? I answer, because the mind of man intrinsically possesses a species of energy to effect what it has declared its intention to effect. "For a nation to be free, it is sufficient that she wills it," is a beautiful form of expression, made by the greatest philosopher and statesman of the age; yet his mind did not stop at merely *willing* the important and glorious event of our political independence; but he wrote, published, and *declared* it, "to a candid world." The spirit that was then abroad in our land, was constantly fostered and fed by a sensible and ocular exhibition of what pervaded so many bosoms. The declaration penned by Jefferson and adopted by the American Congress, operated upon the faltering minds of thousands, as powerfully as holding up the hands of Aaron, whilst Moses fought the battles of Israel against the Amalekites. So in the case of *mental independence*; its simple declaration by Robert Owen, at New Harmony, two years ago, has done more to unshackle the minds of hundreds from the thralldom of superstition, and the dogmas of opinion, than any event since the general introduction of letters. The *manner* too of that declaration, as well as the matter, (and manner had much merit in that of our political affairs) has done much to advance its utility. It breathed a spirit of enlightened liberality. It blamed nor praised no one. The errors of the mind were viewed, as they ought to be, accidental, injurious, but remediable—yet not without the proper application of proper means. One of the most important is, to take a bold and determined stand, to examine every thing coolly, deliberately, and by the test of reason; and until a high elevation can be obtained for our species by soaring above all bigotry and priestcraft, all parties, even the priests

themselves should be treated with respect and kindness. Let this course be pursued; let justice be done to the unfortunate; let all our efforts, whether mental or political, in furtherance of human happiness, breathe a spirit of charity, and all opposition shall retire before them, as the vapors of the morning flee at the approaching sun.

Christian Liberty.—We publish the following items from the *Brattleborough Messenger* for two reasons—first, because we are equally desirous with the bookseller alluded to, of obtaining a copy of “Ethan Allen’s Bible” for republication—and secondly, because the paragraphs themselves are a pretty fair specimen of the rancorous feelings entertained by bigots and fanatics against every publication tending to enlarge the human mind, and to unveil the frauds of the priesthood. They may go on as long as they please reducing to “dust and ashes,” all the liberal works they can obtain. But this will have no effect in preventing the diffusion of knowledge, or in changing the nature of truth. The demand for the theological writings of Paine, and similar productions is daily increasing; and whether the “*Christian world*” may want them or not, we presume that those who find it their interest to republish them, will not consult the editor of the *Brattleborough Messenger*, as to the propriety or impropriety of the proceeding.

From the *Brattleborough Messenger*.

Ethan Allen’s Theology.—A bookseller advertises for a copy of “Ethan Allen’s Bible.” It will be curious if he cannot find one in the State. It was an *abominable* deistical compilation, with some touches of *original infidelity* forming a big, heavy volume, published at Bennington, above forty years ago, and such works soon become *dust and ashes*.

We have seen with surprise a new edition advertised, in New-York, of “Thomas Paine’s Theological Works.”—“*Works*” indeed, and *theology* too! Paine and Ethan Allen were very good patriots, but very bad theologians. The *Christian world* wants no more of such “Theology.”

Liberal Tracts.—The friends of liberal principles in this city, are about to raise a fund for the purpose of printing and circulating such *Tracts* as are calculated to counteract the demoralizing effects of superstition, to enlarge the mind, and to promote human happiness. The plan has so far progressed, that we hope being able in our next to give its details. Meanwhile, we would earnestly recommend the formation, in all parts of the Union, of Auxiliary Societies for the accomplishment of the same object. It is intended to supply the *Tracts at cost*, so that they may be more generally circulated, and thus become more extensively useful.

New-York Yearly Meeting of Friends.—We understand that a division has taken place in this Society, on account of difference of opinion as to religious subjects. The party seceding, who call themselves the *orthodox*, amount to about 400 of both sexes; leaving from 1800 to 2000 in possession of the property belonging to the Society. We consider this a signal triumph of liberal principles.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Heathen Idolatry.—The heathen idolatry is a common topic of declamation and abuse on occasions of this nature. It stands, with modern absurdity and folly in the same circumstances with a woman who has been beautiful, but whose charms are faded, and who is ever the object of the most malignant satire to another who is distinguished with a native and original ugliness. The superstitions of the ancients, like their beautiful edifices, are defaced only by time and violence. The communities of antiquity, in their decline, seem to have been like some great minds in the decline of life; who are said to retain their former conclusions while they have totally forgotten the premises and calculations which had led them to them. The Heathen mythology is natural philosophy allegorized, and abused by poets and priests: Jupiter and Juno, and Minerva and Neptune, were personifications of real principles in nature; whereas the phantoms of modern superstition are representations of no true objects in heaven or earth. The former were in the state of all similes, metaphors and poetical ornaments, liable to be misunderstood and abused; but they were also useful, and furnished the most elegant entertainment and pleasure: the latter, being the produce only of perverted and gloomy imaginations, are never useful, never pleasing; but merely the instruments of imposture, to intimidate and injure mankind. Idolatry, therefore, was to be restrained, as all excesses of natural passions are to be restrained. For, by fixing the attention wholly on poetical persons, men were led away from nature, the only source of truth; they easily wandered into follies and vices; and their whole system fell a sacrifice to more extravagant and mysterious institutions. The emperor Julian seems to have had these ideas; and he lived at the very period of this remarkable revolution. He probably thought, that men were not at so great distance from the real principles of nature and truth; and would not require so much trouble to lead them back to those principles while they adhered to the heathen idolatry, as when the ambitious Christian priests had plunged them into the fathomless abyss of mysteries; awed them with heavenly and infernal phantoms; bound them down to unintelligible and useless dogmas; and reduced them to the worst species of slavery. Succeeding events proved that he judged rightly. Men, by resigning their faculties to pretended heavenly commissioners, and becoming the tools of their ambition, exhibited a scene of ignorance, barbarism, cruelty, and villany, beyond any thing which had ever dishonored the annals of the world. This wretched state remained until some fragments of ancient learning were recovered; and some persons were tempted, by manly thoughts and fine writing, into reason, into heresies, and rebellions.

Holy Relics.—In the year 359, the emperor Constantius, out of a presumed and, perhaps, not inconsistent respect, caused the remains of St. Andrew and St. Luke to be removed from their ancient place of interment to the temple of the twelve apostles, at Constantinople; and from that example, the practice of searching for the bodies of saints and martyrs increased so rapidly, that in the year 386, we find almost the

whole of the devotees engaged in that pursuit. Relics, of course, speedily became of considerable value; and as they were all alleged to possess peculiar virtues, no expense or labor were spared to provide such treasures for every public religious foundation. Hence translations innumerable took place of the decayed members of persons reputed saints; and where the entire bodies could not be collected, the pious contented themselves with possessing such parts alone as 'Divine Providence chose to bless them with.' Without these sacred relics, no establishments could expect to thrive; and so provident had the persons been who labored in their collection that not a single religious house but could produce one or more of those invaluable remains.

Of the number of these relics that have been preserved, the following is only a partial list:—

A finger of St. Andrew; a finger of St. John the Baptist; the thumb of St. Thomas; a tooth of our Lord; a rib of our Lord, or, as it is styled, of the *Verbum caro factum*, the word made flesh; the hem of our Lord's garment, which cured the diseased woman; the seamless coat of our Lord; a tear which our Lord shed over Lazarus, which was preserved by an angel, who gave it in a phial to Mary Magdalene; two handkerchiefs, on which are impressions of our Saviour's face; the one sent by our Lord himself as a present to Agbarus, prince of Edessa; the other given at the time of his crucifixion to a holy woman, named Veronica; the rod of Moses with which he performed his miracles; a lock of hair of Mary Magdalene's; a hem of Joseph's garment; a feather of the Holy Ghost; a finger of the Holy Ghost; a feather of the angel Gabriel; a finger of a cherubim; the water-pot used at the marriage in Gallilee; the slippers of the antideluvian Enoch; the face of a seraphim, with only part of the nose; the *snout* of a seraphim, thought to have belonged to the preceding; the coal that broiled St. Lawrence; the square buckler, lined with 'red velvet, and the short sword of St. Michael; a phial of the 'sweat of St. Michael,' when he contended with Satan; some of the rays of the star which appeared to the Magi; with innumerable others, not quite consistent with decency to be here described.

The miracles wrought by these and such other precious remains, have been enlarged upon by writers, whose testimony, aided by the *protecting care* of the inquisition, no one durst openly dispute who was not of the 'holy brotherhood;' although it would appear, by the confessions of some of those respectable persons, that 'instances have occurred of their failure,' but that they always 'recovered their virtue, when,' as Galbert, a monk of Marchiennes informs us, 'they were flogged with rods,' &c.

Free Press Association.—The regular monthly meeting of the "Free Press Association," will be held in the Lecture room in the "Temple of Science," (formerly the Bethel Academy,) Elizabeth-street, between Houston and Bleeker streets, on Sunday, (to-morrow) June 1st, at 11 o'clock forenoon. In the afternoon, a Theological Lecture will be delivered at 4 o'clock.

The CORRESPONDENT is now published at 422 Broadway, by Geo. Houston & Co. Terms—\$3 per annum in advance. The first four numbers having been reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 20.

NEW-YORK, JUNE 7, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS.

[Continued from page 292.]

Nor are those beggars, whom the "American Tract Society" in Nassau-street send round the country, slow in appealing to the pride of the most ignorant portion of the community who may be in good circumstances, in order to extort from them a part of the fruits of their hard earned labor. To the children they say, Give us 25 cents—to the adults, 50 cents, and this will constitute you members of the Auxiliary Tract Society. And if you continue to pay these sums annually, you will always enjoy that honorable distinction.

But of what benefit is this to members thus created?—What sort of good results to them from this pretended distinction? They have no voice in the society arrangements—they are appointed to no office that can procure them a single advantage. What good, I ask, to children, and to women, and to men in common life, can result from this membership? All that comes of this dignified station is—the ponderous honor of being members of the Auxiliary Tract Society—an honor, however, which they can only enjoy while they continue their annual contributions. A child honored thus, can go to school, and exalt himself over the low estate of his fellow pupil that has not yet purchased the mighty honor; and a proud, silly woman, can set herself up on the score of her membership over the women in her neighborhood that have not arrived at that dignity. If these are benefits, then may the Tract Society of the city of New-York boast of distributing them most extensively.

But we are assured that these Auxiliary Societies compensate their members for their contributions, by supplies of tracts at little more than the actual cost. Now suppose these tracts really worth the expense of paper and printing, it is an undeniable fact that the agents employed by the Society to hawk them round the country, clear a most enormous profit on them, which they no doubt share with their employers. By a statement of the different tracts published by the "American Tract Society," it appears that the agents are supplied "at the rate of 10 pages for one cent, or 1000 pages for one dollar;" and from this charge Auxiliary Societies receive a discount of 10 per cent. Instead, however, of these agents, or managers of the Auxiliary Societies supplying the members with tracts at the price paid for them in New-York, they uniformly exact from 300 to 400 per cent. additional from their credulous dupes. This is another proof of the benevolence, disinterestedness and

devotion with which these Tract Society managers endeavor to promote the glory of God, and the cause of religion! Of all the nefarious schemes and speculations, got up in modern times for the purpose of swindling the unwary of their money, that of the "American Tract Society" stands the most prominent.

There are, doubtless, few that have not seen some of the tracts in question; and I confidently appeal to them whether they are not equal violations of sense and English—insults to the understanding, and libels on morality. It is seldom that I have leisure to open them; but curiosity led me the other day to look into one, which professed to give a variety of wonderful stories of the efficacy of tracts, amounting, in the estimation of the writer, to actual miracles. Of these I have extracted three of the shortest, which may be regarded as fair specimens of this sort of religious humbugging:—

"It happened that a poor drunken profligate who used to spend all his weekly earnings at the ale-house, came home early on a Saturday night, complaining bitterly of the landlady, who had turned him out, and refused him credit till he paid his old score, and kept his *old hat* in pledge for it. [This must have been a long score indeed which an *old hat* would pay! and the *earnings* of the "poor drunken profligate," as he is charitably styled, must have been enormous!] *Next morning* the first thing he saw was a tract on his table. [How did the tract-distributor find out this interesting story, unless he was at the time tippling in the alehouse himself?] This tract had a little wood-cut on the front page, representing a drunken man turned out of a public house, and the landlady abusing him. 'Bless my soul,' says he, 'they tract-men be desperate expeditious! See here, Missus, they've got oi already in a picter. All the country will know it, and oi'll be ashamed to show my facee.' *He read the tract and went to church that evening, and became a CONVERTED CHARACTER.*"

"A poor man got up in a public tract meeting, and said, Mr. Chairman, my wife Margaret and I were sitting *l'other night* face to face by the fire. She was a scolding at I, and I was a scolding at she. She fell a cursing at I, and I fell a cursing too at she. When, *see your worship*, in comes a *gentleman-like* [very like we dare say!—How did he happen to come in so appropriately?] and sets himself down betwixt us two. Good people, says he, you are leading a sad life: read that tract. So we fell to and read it, when he was gone. And I says to Mary—Mary, says I, it's a sad thing we have lived so long without public worship:—*let us go to church to-morrow.* We did so, *your worship*; and now Mary and John live as happy together as the days are long. *And all this, you ses, was brought about by a tract.*

The next example is equally admirable with the above piece of Darby-and-Joanism:—"A captain in the army was very ill—and his medical friend paid him great attention till he was cured. The captain, in gratitude, offered the doctor a ticket to the Theatre! [A strong proof of gratitude!] The doctor, however, said it was *against his profession* and inclination to go to plays; but, *in return*, he gave the captain a tract! and requested him to read it before the curtain rose, when he was at the play. The captain did so, and was deeply affected; and at four

o'clock in the morning (having staid out the play, though so deeply affected,) went in great distress of mind to the doctor's house, grievously stricken in his conscience. From that day forth he became a *converted character*, and when he was dying of a fever, (a brain fever evidently) he ordered the identical tract to be brought to him, and holding it up in his hand, sent an affectionate message to the doctor, [query,—why was he absent ?] and also proclaimed the Gospel to the officers who surrounded his dying-bed."

It cannot have escaped notice, that, in these specimens of Tract conversations, the narrators are extremely careful to avoid giving *names*, or any data by which we may judge of the credibility of the narrative. It is either a Thomas Wilkins or John Smith, or some boor so brutally ignorant as to be utterly unworthy of the least attention;—or it is an *officer in the army, a captain in the navy, a lady, &c. &c.* This I think, of itself, is sufficient to give the lie to all the tract miracles.

The way in which this nonsense is got up, is abominable. Eaves-droppings—listening at doors and windows—questionings of neighbors and public house keepers, are all resorted to, in order to get at something in the private history of some poor devil to which they may apply their paper plaster. Even the habitations of sickness and want, are not sacred from the intrusions of their *Visitors*; and the tranquillity of a death-bed is disturbed by these fierce foes to common sense and to common decency.

VERITAS.

[To be continued.]

ORIGIN OF EVIL.

MR. EDITOR—The following dialogue I have taken from an old English Grammar, published in 1746, by John Brightland. It is there used as an example of logical reasoning, showing the manner of carrying on an argument; and whatever might have been the intention of the author in giving strength and publicity to such opinions, it certainly contains many valuable truths. If it is worthy, please to insert it in your interesting paper.

Athens, May 25, 1828.

CATO.

A. I wonder you are so obstinate as to deny that God has an *Efficacious Operation* in the sins of men, which the scriptures in many places, so openly and plainly testify.

B. I only denied that I understood how this is done. Perhaps my dulness makes that a difficulty to me, which is obvious to another. But I would willingly be informed by you, because I can neither believe nor condemn what I do not understand: what, therefore, do you mean by an *efficacious operation in the sins of men*? Do you mean that he makes them sin?

A. Far be it from me, for so God would be the author of sin. It is man commits sin, not God.

B. Do you mean, that God makes men to commit sin, or forces men to commit sin?

A. I would not have expressed this in so rude a manner; but God, in a dark and unknown manner, so permits sin, that it must necessarily be committed.

B. You used before the word *operation*, now you use *permit*; pray, do they mean the same thing?

A. These words do not absolutely mean the same thing; but they must be joined together, so that what God does should be called an *efficacious permission*; for God neither makes sin, nor does he simply permit it.

B. You therefore mean, that God permits something and does something, so that sin necessarily follows.

A. That is what I mean.

B. Perhaps then, God does in this, what he does, who, cutting down the dykes, lets the water in to overflow the field. For he *does* something in breaking the dyke, and he *permits* something in suffering the sea to pass through the breach.

A. My mind could not have been expressed by a more happy similitude.

B. But according to our common way of speaking, we should say that he who made a breach in the dyke had let in the water; nor would any one accuse the dyke or the sea of any manner of fault. But you, if I mistake you not, accuse man of the fault; and say man, not God, committed the sin. Wherefore your *efficacious permission* seems unintelligible to me.

A. Do you not observe, that as to the things themselves, there is a vast difference between them? For men are endowed with understanding and will, which the dyke and the sea have not; and for that reason, that is a crime in man which is not so in the sea and the dyke.

B. But I ask of you, whether that which God *does*, or *permits*, has that efficacy (for that word you have likewise used) that men can no more not sin when that he has ordered it, than the sea overflow the field, through the breach, which affords a free passage.

A. You have my meaning.

B. According to you, therefore, there is the same relation in that sense between God and sin, as there is between the man who made a breach in the dyke, and the destruction of the fields.

A. There is, as to the event; for both are equally necessary.

B. The action therefore of both, according to the custom of speech, may be expressed in the same manner: that is—as he who breaks down the dyke is called the cause of the loss of the field, because he did that which necessarily produced that loss; so God is the author of sin, since he has put man under a necessity of sinning.

A. I told you before, that I will not make use of those rude expressions.

B. But still I do not understand what you say, or it comes to that point; for we must not regard the empty sounds of words, which signify nothing, but mind the ideas to which they are annexed.

A. What! you'll prescribe rules to me of speaking, as if I did not know how to hold a discourse! You sufficiently understand, that my opinion is, that God has to do with evil; that he is not a mere bare spectator, but is so far an agent, that on his acting man commits sin.

B. If God did nothing before the sin, would not the sin be committed?

A. No;—for nothing is done without the efficacy of the Divine Providence.

B. What! do you believe that man alone cannot violate laws?

A. That he can, I deny, when I deny that any thing can be done without the efficacy of the Divine Providence.

B. God therefore, helps us to do wickedly in the same manner as he helps us to do well.

A. You mistake; for in evil we must distinguish the *action*, and the *viciousness* of the *action*. God helps us to the doing the *action*, but not to the *vice*. But in *good actions*, he helps us to the *good*, that is in the *action*.

B. I beg you, inform me what you mean by the words "*an action*," and what by the *viciousness of an action*?

A. I will make it plain by this example: in the *hatred of our neighbor*, there is the action of the hatred, which in itself is indifferent, and is only called *bad*, when directed to an unlawful object, and *good* when to a lawful. Next, there is the relation of that action to the object which is evil. God does not concur to this relation, though there is a necessity of his *concurring to the action*, without which it would not be done.

B. By what you have said, I suppose you mean, that God first generates in the mind of man hatred in general; which is in itself neither good nor evil: then there comes another relation of the hatred to the object, as in the example to our neighbor.—Do I understand you?

A. Partly you do, but not entirely; for I do not think there is any such existence as hatred in general, which should afterwards be determined to a certain object; this is contrary to experience.

B. Does God then create that very hatred that is directed against our neighbor?

A. Most certainly, the hatred, but not the relation.

B. But does that hatred exist without that relation?

A. Not at all; for the very moment that it is created in our minds, it is the hatred of our neighbor.

B. According to you, therefore, God creates such an hatred, which co-exists in such a manner with a vicious relation, that it cannot be separated or distinguished from it but by abstraction.

A. He does so.

B. Can this hatred, thus generated in the mind of man, be by the man directed to a lawful object, as *vice*, for example?

A. It cannot; for the action of God being past, the certain event must necessarily follow.

B. I beseech you, Sir, if a man should put a burthen on another's shoulders, which he that bore it could not afterwards throw off, and by that means he should break his ribs, would not he that put on such a burthen be looked on as the breaker of his ribs, if he had known the event of his action?

A. Most certainly.

B. Should a man push another, walking by a river side, into the water, who should there be drowned, should we not say that he who thrust him in drowned him?

A. Certainly.

B. Yet there are some men who would say, that you are in an error in this particular; that the *imposing* and the *thrusting* was produced by both; but not the breaking the ribs, and the drowning, as God generates hatred which is directed against our neighbor without that evil relation.

A. It is indeed most evident, that the men instanced, were guilty of the fracture and drowning; but the matter is otherwise with God; who is not obliged to give an account to poor miserable men of his administration.

B. But if he did, what you would wickedly persuade us, either all sinners must be acquitted of any crime, or God himself, who compels the sins, condemned.

A. Don't you know, that *God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts ours?* Shall the pot complain that it was not made in such and such a manner?

THE HISTORY OF THE MAN AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART.

[Continued from page 297.]

The Philistines at this time collected their forces to attack the Jews. For which purpose Achish summoned David, (1 Sam. xxviii. 1) and met with cheerful compliance. *Surely, says David, thou shalt know what thy servants can do.* He accordingly marched his adherents, with the troops of king Achish: but when the princes of the Philistines saw a company of Hebrews in their army, they were much surprised, and questioned Achish concerning them. The account which Achish gave of them, did not satisfy the princes, who justly feared he might prove a dangerous auxiliary. *Make this fellow return,* said they, *that he may go again to the place which thou hast appointed him, and let him not go down with us to the battle, lest in the battle he be an adversary to us: for wherewith should he reconcile himself to his master? Should it not be with the heads of these men?* David was accordingly dismissed, very much mortified at their distrust of him.

Upon his return to Ziglak, he found, that during his absence, the Amalekites had made reprisals upon him; had burned Ziglak, and had carried off all the women captives, (ch. xxx. 1.) But in the relation there is one remark well worth noting, which is, that *they slew not any, either great or small:* so much more moderation had these poor heathens in their just revenge, than the enlightened David in his unprovoked insult. Upon this misfortune, his band began to mutiny; and were upon the point of stoning him, when he, who knew their weak side, inquired of the Lord what he should do; and evaded their rage by inspiring them with a resolution to pursue the Amalekites, and with the hopes of recovering all their losses. He, therefore, with four hundred picked men, set out on the pursuit; by the way they found a straggler who had fainted; and after recovering him, gained by his means intelligence of their rout. David came upon them unexpectedly, at a place where they were, without apprehension, making themselves merry upon their success; and though David's men had recovered all they had lost, together with their booty, and found their wives and children unhurt, yet could

not their captain resist so inviting an opportunity of gratifying his cruel disposition: the pursuit and slaughter continued from the twilight (we know not whether of the morning or the evening) of one day, until the evening of the next. None escaping but a party which rode upon camels. (v. 17.)

Of the spoil taken from these people, David sent to the elders of his own tribe of Judah; *and to all the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt.* By which means he kept them hearty in his interest. The dispute between the Jewish and Philistine armies did not terminate but by the defeat of the latter, the death of Saul and of three of his sons. (1 Sam. xxxi.)

Such was the catastrophe of king Saul! a man advanced from the humble state of a shepherd, by the prophet Samuel, to be his deputy in the government of the Jewish nation, under the specious name of king: a man, who, allowing for the peculiar complexion of the people over whom he was placed, does not, on the whole, seem to suffer by comparison with any other king in the same history; and whose character does not appear to be stained with any conspicuous fault, except that he was one degree less cruel than his haughty patron: and was disobedient enough to endeavor to be in effect, what he was only intended to be in name.

We shall now have an opportunity of observing the conduct of our hero in a regal capacity. The death of Saul facilitated his advancement to the sovereignty, to which he had no pretension, either by the right of inheritance, which was claimed by Ish bosheth, a remaining son of Saul, or by popular election, which Saul himself had the shew of; but by the clandestine appointment of an old Levite, which inspired him with hopes, that by arms and intrigue, he at length realized.

David had returned to Ziklag but two days, when on the third, there came to him an Amalekite, who officiously informed him of the event of the battle between the Jews and Philistines, owning himself to be the person who killed Saul, hoping to be well rewarded for his news by David; whose ambition was so well known, that he presented him with Saul's crown and bracelets. (2 Sam. i. 10.) But alas! he knew not David, and perished in this experiment: David ordered him to be killed for daring to slay the Lord's anointed. (v. 15.) Who can help smiling at the relation of David's tearing the clothes off his back, and bursting out into a sorrowful lamentation for the death of a man, to whose destruction he had just before so freely offered to lend assistance?

Upon this alteration of affairs, David asking council of the Lord, was advised to leave Ziklag, and go to Hebron, one of the cities of Judah; whither he and all his men repaired. (2 Sam. ii. 1.) There he got his partizans to anoint him king over Judah; (not claiming, it appears, in right of the sacred unction bestowed on him by Samuel :) at the same time that Abner, Saul's general, had at Mahanaim, made Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, king over all Israel. (v. 4. 8.) Upon this division of the kingdom, a battle was fought at the pool of Gideon, on the part of Ish-bosheth, commanded by general Abner, and on the part of David by general Joab; victory declared in favor of David, with small loss on

either side, except that Joab lost his brother Asahel, who was killed by Abner's own hand. (2 Sam. ii. 17. 23.)

We must here be content with general hints; being only informed that *there was a long war between the house of Saul and the house of David; but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker.* (2 Sam. iii. 1.) What very much conduced to this, was an ill timed quarrel between Ish-bosheth and general Abner; concerning one of Saul's concubines, with whom Abner had been too familiar; (v. 7.) and his resentment of the notice taken of this, occasioned a treaty to be negotiated between him and David, whom Abner engaged to establish over all Israel. (v. 12.) David accepted his offer, but demanded as a preliminary, the restoration of his first wife Michal; who, during the disputes between him and Saul, had been espoused to another. (v. 13.) This demand he likewise made openly, by an express message to Ish-bosheth, who kindly complied with it; the poor man who had married her, following her weeping all the way. (v. 15, 16.) One cannot help noting David's amorous disposition here, which could not be content with six wives who bore him children, (2 Sam. iii. 2) [no mention of those who did not] but was yet so warm, that even in his most important concerns, carnality must be a previous consideration.

After Abner had traitorously endeavored to advance the interest of David, he had an interview with him, which, quickly after he was departed, came to the ears of Joab; who, unknown to David, sends for him back again, and privately stabs him, in revenge for the loss of his brother Asahel. (v. 27.) This was a base piece of treachery, worthy the servant of such a master, to assassinate a man in cool blood in revenge for an action committed in the heat of battle, in self defence, and after fair warning given.

On the murder of Abner, David again acts the mourner, (v. 21.) which has a greater probability of being sincere now, than when he grieved for the unhappy Saul; because the false Abner was preparing to do him essential service, by betraying his master's cause. But the event proved fully as advantageous to David, as will presently appear.

When Ish-bosheth and his friends heard of the fate of Abner, who had been the very life of their cause, they were much dejected; and two villains, named Rechab and Baanah, hoping to make their fortunes by the public calamity, went and murdered their master, king Ish-bosheth, as he was reposing himself during the heat of the day; and brought his head to David. (2 Sam. iv. 5.) But not reflecting on an obvious maxim in politics, they, like the Amalekite before, who claimed the merit of killing Saul, soon found that he thought it adviseable to punish the traitors, whatever he thought of the treason. (2 Sam. iii. 12.)

Had David possessed the least spark of genuine grace, he would have been ashamed to act the part he did relative to the death of Ish-bosheth. He would have been ashamed to act the hypocrite so openly, in seeming sorry for an event, which removed the only formidable obstacle to his ambitious views. He would have been ashamed to punish the immediate instruments in perpetrating a crime of which he, the usurper of part of the unfortunate king's dominions and a pretender to the whole, was the remote, though efficient cause. Since had David aspir-

ed to no other sceptre than his shepherd's crook and had not the villains presumed on the usurper's gratitude, Ish-bosheth, who was a quiet prince, might have reigned long an honor to himself and his country.

Ish-bosheth does not appear to have been a man of parts, qualified to contend with such an antagonist as David: for nothing is recorded of him; Abner was the person who set him up; and had he lived, would as easily set him down, and though no qualifications are a security against assassination, yet as in the case of another unfortunate monarch, Darius, king of Persia, such cowardly wretches generally take the advantage of precipitating misfortunes already commenced that they may pay their court to the rising sun.

The murder of this unhappy son of an unhappy father, advanced David to the dignity to which he aspired. (2 Sam. v. 3. 1 Chron. xi. 3.) [though we shall see in a passage which reflects no great honor to him, that Saul had more sons yet living.] He was now in his thirty-eighth year; having reigned seven years and an half in Hebron, (2 Sam. ii. 11. v. 5.) over the tribe of Judah.

Although David obtained the government, yet could not his enterprising genius continue satisfied with such an exaltation. The first object of his attention now, was the city of Jerusalem, then inhabited by the Jebusites. [But it was of no importance whose property it was, if David conceived a desire for it.] This city he besieged, (v. 6.) and the inhabitants relying on the strength of their fortifications, out of derision planted cripples on their ramparts to guard their walls; saying, *except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come hither.* (2 Sam. v. 6.) Nevertheless David carried the place, and made it his chief city. (ch. v. 7, 9. 1 Chron. xiv. 11.)

N. B. He took some wives and concubines out of Jerusalem, his new acquisition, (2. Sam. v. 13.)

While he was thus amorously engaged, the Philistines hearing that he was made king over all Israel, came and disturbed him: but David, according to the usual term, *smote them*; and his strokes were always sufficiently bloody.

I shall not dwell on the comic tale of David's bringing home the ark; it was brought on a new cart drawn by oxen; and Uzzah was smote *by the Lord*, as the historian asserts, for his impiety in saving the ark from being overturned. On this account it was no longer trusted to profane hands, but carried the remainder of the way upon the more holy shoulders of the Levites, with great parade, attended by musicians, and by David himself, who, dressed in a linen ephod, *danced before the Lord with all his might*; and this, in such a frantic, indecent manner, that he exposed his nakedness to the bye-standers. Wherefore his wife Michal sneered at him. *How GLORIOUS was the king of Israel to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows SHAMELESSLY uncovereth himself.* David, it seems, was of a different opinion; for he told her he *would* play before the Lord; and would be yet *more vile* than she had represented him: adding—*and of the maid servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honor.* I would advise some staunch zealot to take this part of David's answer, for his text; spiritualize it, and give the mystical sense of it; lest the pro-

fane, who are content with the evident signification of words, should construe it no otherwise than into a compliment on the proportion of his parts; intimating that he had no cause to be ashamed of what he exposed. This story is concluded with a remark, as striking as the rest of it.—*THEREFORE, Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child until the day of her death.*

After this, David smote the Philistines, not sparing even Gath, that city which had so humanely protected him. He then smote the Moabites, putting to the sword two thirds of the nation, by causing them to lie prostrate on the ground, and measuring them by lines; *even with two lines measured he to put to death; and with one full line to keep alive*: so systematic was his wrath! Hadadezer, king of Sobah, was the next whom he smote; who being assisted by the Syrians of Damascus, he next smote them. Yet all this smiting and slaying, is so obscurely mentioned, that we know nothing of the offences committed against this mighty chief to excite such blood-thirsty indignation. Indeed the cause is, without much difficulty, deducible from the produce of these wars, which sufficiently indicate the nature of David's *thirst*. Great quantities of gold, silver, and brass, are said to have been brought to Jerusalem, and the priests may with reason be supposed to be the instigators of these wars; since we find all the plunder surrendered to them. We have therefore no cause to wonder at the exalted praises they have bestowed upon him. He is said to have *gat him a name when he returned from smiting the Syrians*,—this may very easily be credited: but it is to be feared that, were the name he gat from the Jews, and that he gat from the Syrians, compared, they would not accord extremely well together.

[To be continued.]

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 7, 1828.

LECTURE DELIVERED AT THE FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

On the Inconsistencies, Absurdities, and Contradictions of the Bible: By the Secretary. LECTURE XV.

When in the course of these investigations I last directed your attention to the books of the Old Testament, it was to that part of them where Jehovah, the God of the Jews, announced his *merciful* determination to destroy all the first born of the land of Egypt, not even, excepting the first-born of the cattle, in order to compel Pharaoh, the sovereign of that country, to let the children of Israel go, at the very moment when this same *merciful* God had so influenced the mind of the king—had so pre-disposed, or hardened his heart, that he could not, however willing he might be to do it, authorize the departure of the Israelites from the country. Moses, too, who was the ambassador to communicate to the Egyptian monarch the unalterable resolves of his God, after delivering his sanguinary message, is said to have left the presence of Pharaoh “in a great anger.”

Now what right had this man to be *angry*? If it was the king of Egypt he was offended with, that monarch surely was not to blame, because he was *constrained* to act as he did by the very idol whom Moses had set up as the Almighty God. It must, therefore, have been with

Jehovah that Moses was indignant; and when we reflect on the capricious way in which this Deity conducted himself in the whole transaction of bringing his chosen people out of Egypt, this was more than sufficient to displease a person of less irritable passions than the murdering Moses; who, notwithstanding he is represented in those writings to have been the "meekest" of men, uniformly belied this gratuitous assertion. In no one occurrence, indeed, of his eventual life, as given in the Old Testament does it appear that the Jewish legislator ever acted otherwise than as a despot, whose will was the law, and who visited every infraction of his arbitrary decrees with the most unrelenting vengeance.

The 12th and 13th chapters of Exodus contain the details of the institution of the Passover, which is still observed by the Jews, although accompanied by the most trifling and unmeaning ceremonies. The account itself is filled with contradictions and tautologies, which would disgrace any human composition. But as they are of a piece with those on which I have already so frequently remarked, I shall not detain you longer on this part of the text than merely to point out one of these absurdities.

In verse 3d, chapter 12th, it is said, "Speak unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, in the tenth day of this month, they shall take to them every man a lamb according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house." This lamb is then directed to be slaughtered and eaten in a certain way; after which we have the following order respecting it, in the tenth verse. "And ye shall let *nothing* of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning, ye shall burn with fire."

Now can any Jew or Christian tell how much of a thing remained where nothing remained? The command was explicit, "Ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning." In whatever way it was to be disposed of, whether eaten, consumed by fire, or buried in the earth, the order was imperative that not a vestige of the lamb was to be allowed to remain over night; Yet, as if the writer was so stupid as not to understand the meaning of his own words, he immediately after introduces a remark which completely destroys the obligatory nature of this decree. "And that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire." Such a foolish contradiction on a subject so trifling, would not have been deserving of notice, were it not that every absurdity proves want of divinity, and shows that these writings are an imposition on the world. Viewed, however, as every rational man will view what is called *holy writ*, we have no reason to expect either correctness or inconsistency in the pages of the bible.

In the 22d verse of the 12th chapter, instructions are given to the Israelites to sprinkle the blood of the pascal lamb on the doors of their houses, to mark a distinction between the objects of Jehovah's mercy, and the objects of his vengeance. Here we have the Jewish God again depicted as a defective being, as a character possessing circumscribed powers, and, like finite beings, requiring hints and tokens of recollection, to enable him to perform his duty: "And when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and upon the side-posts, the lord will pass over the door." Fine representation this of infinite wisdom. After drowning

the world, he is said to have set a rainbow in the cloud to remind him that he ought not to do so again. Here he orders blood to be sprinkled on the doors to prevent mistakes, and to guard the lives of his chosen people against the vengeance that awaited their enemies.

Such ideas and representations of divine power evidently originated in days of darkness and superstition. They stamp with ignorance, and with infamy the book in which they are found, and must for ever remain to the reflecting mind, mementos against superstition and religious folly. How can christians, who have adopted these writings as divine, explain the reasons of Jehovah's conduct? How exculpate their God from the charge of cruelty, injustice, and murder, so manifest in the indiscriminate slaughter of the first born of all the Egyptians; "from the first born of Pharaoh (says the text) that sitteth on the throne, even unto the first born of the maid servant that is behind the mill." Lice, frogs, flies, blood, fury and vengeance were sent forth on the Egyptian king, to induce him to liberate God's chosen people from slavery. Divinity itself is represented as making repeated efforts to produce an effect, which it could, by one act of power, have accomplished in a moment! Who can peruse these antiquated tales, and not discover in them marks of egregious folly. A single precept which inculcates benevolence, and justice, is of more value than ten thousand volumes of such contemptible legends.

Had the writers, or compilers of the Old Testament, made it their study to destroy the moral excellence of their own deity, they could not have adopted a better plan of accomplishing this than that presented in the book of Exodus. In the 14th chapter, this idol is exhibited as still going on and hardening the heart of Pharaoh, until he at last effects his total destruction. The Israelites, after the midnight butchery of the unoffending children of the Egyptians, having been permitted to escape, Pharaoh is inspired with a disposition to recall this permission, and to pursue them. Now who inspired him to do an act which terminated in the ruin of himself and of all his host? Why the text informs us that it was the self same God who had so often urged him to do what could produce nothing but evil to himself and to his subjects. "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honored upon Pharaoh and upon all his host: that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord." Here we have Jehovah making the king of Egypt do a certain thing, and then killing him for doing it. Is not this the climax of villainy? Is there another religious code in the world in which deity is depicted in more horrible characters than the God of the Jews is exhibited in their sacred writings? If there is, I am an entire stranger to it.

But there was a particular reason, it seems, for this barbarity; namely, that the Egyptians might know that he was the *Lord*. How terribly jealous of his fame was this Jewish divinity! Always distressed and afraid lest the people should not know, forsooth, that he was the Lord. *I am the Lord—and ye shall know that I am the Lord*—was the constant burden of his song. Does Nature stand in need of such pitiful resorts to make its power known, and preserve the dignity of its character? The language said to have been used by the Jewish God, instead

of bearing the marks of solemn assertions of a powerful being, are the rancorous ebullitions of weak, erring man.

The heart of Pharaoh having been hardened by Jehovah, for at least the twentieth time, we are told that he pursued after the children of Israel, accompanied by his "*horses and chariots*," and his *horsemen* and his army." After all the cattle in Egypt had been previously killed, no less than *three* times during the plague working miracles, it was not to be expected that we should have met with *horses* in the army of Pharaoh so very soon after that catastrophe. But as this was a miraculous age, let us for once suppose that an army of horses might as easily have been produced by a miracle as the myriads of frogs, of lice, of fleas, and of locusts that overrun the whole land of Egypt; Or that a whole legion of devils (5000) should have been created in the time of Jesus for the purpose of taking possession of the body of a single Jew, that the Saviour of the world might have an opportunity of displaying his power by casting them out; and of showing his dislike for pork, by sending them into a herd of swine; an antipathy however, which he does not appear to have communicated to his followers. At least, we do not discover that the Christians of the present day, entertain any repugnance for an animal as food which the reputed founder of their religion, who was every whit a Jew, is said to have held in the greatest abhorrence.

The army of Pharaoh having come in sight, the Israelites the "chosen people," notwithstanding all the "mighty wonders" which had been performed in their presence, became terribly alarmed, and, like all cowards when danger approaches, they cried unto their invisible God for help, and accused Moses of bringing them into the wilderness to die there. In this dilemma, Moses plucked up courage and commanded his slavish banditti to stand still and see the salvation of God. Knowing what a credulous people he had to deal with, and recollecting the success of his former tricks, the Jewish conjuror again comes forward with his rod of enchantment, with which he is represented as having power to divide the red sea, that the Israelites might pass through in safety on dry land. This pretended miracle, however, is stated to have been performed in a way that completely destroys the credibility of the whole story; for in one part, it is said that Moses divided the waters by stretching out his rod, in another, that this effect was produced by a strong east wind, which God sent for the purpose. Besides, the whole account is marked with such extravagance as to render it unworthy of credit. It professes to detail an occurrence amounting to a violation of those immutable laws by which the whole of nature is regulated. It is, therefore, destitute of all the features of truth and consistency.

The red sea past, and Jehovah having, as the text says, "gotten him honor upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots and his horsemen," by drowning the whole of them, this merciful achievement is followed by a triumphant song from Moses, in which he celebrates the praises of his God, and ascribes to him all the properties which the surrounding nations attributed to the God of battles. In this song the ignorance and savage ferocity of the chosen band are again manifested; and evinced beyond all

contradiction that at the period to which this part of their sacred writings relate, they were sunk in the greatest ignorance, the slaves of superstition, and destitute of true morality.

[To be continued.]

Another Liberal Paper.—We have received the prospectus of a semi-monthly journal to be published in Philadelphia, and to be entitled "*The Liberal Press*." The following extract is sufficient to render the views of the projectors of this journal intelligible:—

"The objects of the journal here proposed to be published, are the development of the human intellect—the dissemination of the truth—the promotion of happiness and virtue. It will utter the shibboleth of no party; for the creed of REASON is co-extensive with illimitable nature—but it will be open to all parties, so long as their communications are conducted with candor, good temper, and kindly feeling. Vulgarity, indecency, and personal abuse, will find no place in this journal.—Vice and immorality, in whatever attractive shape they may appear, whatever seductive form they may assume, shall always be discountenanced and condemned. Avowing in the onset an entire disfranchisement from all sectarian dogmas, the main design of this journal will be to remove all those party walls of partition, which not only keep man apart from his fellow man, but the erection and continuance of which have so often excited the baser passions of our nature, "hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," and have not unfrequently deluged the nations of the earth with human blood. This journal then announces tidings of great joy—it proclaims universal benevolence, peace and good will to man—it proclaims glory to the God of Nature—to the God of unnumbered worlds, and of incalculable myriads of intelligent beings—it proclaims light to them who sit in mental darkness, and to the miserably enslaved, life, and liberty, and joy—It will, if it can, accelerate that halcyon age, when "the lion shall lie down with the lamb," and when there shall be nothing human to hurt or to destroy throughout the habitable globe."

The "*Liberal Press*" is to be published in the 8vo form, at \$2 per annum, payable quarterly in advance. All who are disposed to take an interest in this journal, are requested to address their communications [postage free] either to Joseph Page, 113, Tilbert-street; J. A. McClintock, Morgan-street, near Tenth-street; Richard Bates, 52, South-street; Stephen Poulterer, 80, South-street; or to Edward Thompson, 169, South Fifth-street, Philadelphia.

A Challenge.—A Mr. Alexander Campbell, (we believe a preacher, and editor of the "Christian Baptist,") having lately been challenged by a correspondent in a Vermont paper, to discuss some subjects of general interest relative to religion, with Dr. Underhill, of Kendal, Ohio, the parson and editor declined to meet the Doctor; but in a letter, published in the same paper in which the challenge appeared, he stated his readiness to engage with Mr. Owen in the examination of the whole religious system which he (Mr. Owen) advocates. In the "*New Harmony Gazette*" of the 14th ult. Mr. Owen expresses his willingness not only to meet Mr. Campbell on his own terms, but invites "the leading ministers of the religious sects in the western country" to enter with him and his friends into a friendly discussion on these subjects in Cincinnati, or in any other central place in the western country where this great object may be obtained.

That (says Mr. O.) which the friends who think with me wish to have discussed and decided is:—

- 1st. Whether all religions are not opposed to facts?
- 2d. Whether all religions do or do not virtually destroy all charity, except for one sect, in thought, word and action?
- 3d. Whether religion does or does not render it necessary that the great mass of mankind, in all countries, should be kept in ignorance and poverty?
- 4th. Whether all religions do or do not require that infants and children should be taught to think that there is merit in believing that the doctrines of their own religion are true and that all other religions are false; and that there is demerit in believing otherwise.

5th. Whether all religions do or do not teach that there is merit and demerit in loving and hating, liking or disliking, according to their doctrines, whether in unison with man's natural feelings or in opposition to them.

6th. Whether almost all bad passions, vices, and moral evils, do or do not emanate from the instruction given in infancy and childhood, that there is merit and demerit in belief, and in liking and disliking.

7th. And lastly, whether mankind can be trained to become more happy, more intelligent, independent, charitable, and kind to each other, with or without religion?

Liberal Tracts.—The arrangements for establishing a Fund for printing and distributing *Liberal Tracts* at cost-price, have now been made; and the Committee of the "*Free Press Association*," to whom the management has been assigned, have appointed Mr. Geo. Houston, Editor of the *Correspondent*, agent for the sale of the Tracts, to whom all applications (post paid) are requested to be made.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Haytian Paradise.—Mr Washington Irving observes, in his *Life of Columbus*, that the Haytians had an idea of a place of reward, to which the spirits of good men repaired after death, where they were reunited to the spirits of those they had most loved during life, and to all their ancestors. Here they enjoyed uninterruptedly, and in perfection, those pleasures which constituted their felicity on earth. They lived in shady and blooming bowers, with beautiful women, and banqueted on delicious fruits. The Paradise of these happy spirits was variously placed, almost every tribe assigning some favorite spot in their native province. Many, however, concurred in describing this region as being near a lake in the western part of the islands, in the beautiful province of Xaragua. Here there were delightful valleys, covered with a delicate fruit called the mamey, about the size of an apricot. They imagined that the souls of the deceased remained concealed among the airy and inaccessible cliff of the mountains during the day, but descended at night into these happy valleys, to regale on this consecrated fruit. The living were sparing, therefore, in eating of it, lest the souls of their friends should suffer from want of their favorite nourishment.

Chinese Holiday.—The 5th April is an annual Chinese Holiday, called Tsing Ming. Near the town of Malacca there is a hill about two miles in circumference, covered with Chinese tombs; from which circumstance the hill is called Bukit China, "Chinese hill." To this sacred spot nearly the whole Chinese population of Malacca annually repair on the morning of the Tsing Ming, in order to offer sacrifice to the souls of departed ancestors. The ceremony is generally commenced by placing slips of gilt paper on the graves; after which they place food and fruit in front of the tombs, as an offering to departed spirits. These ceremonies over, they spend the rest of the day in feasting on the leavings of the spirits. Those who have recently buried a parent or near relative spend some time in crying over the grave, complaining bitterly that the deceased should have left them so soon, and imploring him or her to protect them, and bestow all needful blessings.

The Progress of Christian Superstition.

When once superstition gets a footing and is encouraged, it does not know where to stop. Not satisfied with the extravagant and Polytheis-

tical doctrines found in the Old and New Testament, the professors of christianity went on from the days of St. Peter, to the present, adding to their *speculative* and *practical* religion, till they reduced it to that *fulsome* and *incomprehensible* system, now before us. And in this they faithfully followed the steps of their forefathers, the Pagan churches of Greece and Rome, who, forgetting the great object of religion, made unto themselves *other Gods*, and canonized each other, as subordinate Divinities, or demi-gods!

It could hardly be believed, had we not their own testimony before us, that men the most distinguished in every age, for their talents and learning, should be the first to abandon their reason, and indulge in gross and abominable superstitions!—Yet, so it has been, and so it is still. But after all, it may be justly doubted, whether those we here allude to, did so much abandon their reason, as the principles of honor and honesty. From the detestable motive of enslaving the human mind, and exalting themselves on the ruins of reason and common sense, religious impostors, in every age of the world, have been found both numerous and ambitious. While they derive dominion and revenue from ignorance and superstition, they do not care how widely their empire is extended.

The following extracts from a Spanish writer will throw full light on the foregoing subject. The reader will clearly see, how mankind have been imposed on for centuries, by the successors of Peter and the Vice-Gerent of Christ on earth; and he will also see, that while men bow their necks and say *amen* to every thing taught and practised by Popes, Bishops and Priests, they will remain for ever pitiful slaves and dreadful victims of their own folly and credulity. To cure our fellow-citizens of this destructive evil, is our only object; and it is hoped our labor will not be lost, or thrown away on many.

Anacletus, succeeded in 101, and introduced his *Dominus Vobiscum*, or, the Lord be with you, into the Liturgy or Mass. He was the first to decree the ordination of Priests, by a Bishop, and the consecration of a Bishop, by three brother Bishops: thus we find, that at an early period, the *Hierarchy* was gaining ground with their *Dominus Vobiscum*.

Linus, ordered that no women should enter the Temples with their heads uncovered; this was in the 63d year of the christian era.

Cletus, the successor of Linus, introduced into his bulls, *health* and *apostolical benediction*, which has been found ever since, of great use in gulling the vulgar, who are led to believe, that they receive blessings from Rome.

[To be continued.]

Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-Street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 8th instant, at half past ten o'clock, forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The CORRESPONDENT is now published at 422 Broadway, by Geo. Houston & Co. Terms—\$3 per annum in advance. The first four numbers having been reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 21.

NEW-YORK, JUNE 14, 1828.

Vol. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS.

[Concluded from page 307.]

But although the Honorables, the Esquires, and the Reverends, who projected this scheme, and who take an active part in carrying it into operation, leave no method untried in order to increase the funds of the American Tract Society, this, after all, is not the principal object which they contemplate by these arrangements. They tell us, that their only wish is to evangelize the world; whereas, all their efforts tend to superstitionize it. Or, in other words, they are bent on forming one common creed—on making one common cause; to reduce all to one common faith—to establish one common national church—to obtain the support of the national and state government—to erect an ecclesiastical throne—to sway an ecclesiastical sceptre—to bind their fellow citizens in the chains and fetters of clerical domination—to prostitute the liberties of our country to the pride, ambition, and avarice of a crafty and designing priesthood—and to wrest from the hands of her citizens the right of thinking and acting but as automaton, whose movements are entirely directed by their managers.

It has been long known, by those who have attended to the proceedings of the Calvinistic clergy in this country, that there exists among them a deep laid, well digested, undeviating design of introducing a church establishment of the Presbyterian description, with a compulsory system of tithes, as connected with the government of the United States. In all the Evangelical papers published in this country, and which are uniformly edited by furious bigots, this scheme of a *national religion* has always been openly and strenuously advocated. In the "Christian Statesman" of the 9th March last, we find the editor arguing against what he calls the unchristian doctrine, now too prevalent in the United States, "that civil government has nothing to do with the maintenance of religion and its professors." He declares that there is not now a civilized, and (we may add says he) a barbarous government, in the world, that adopts this opinion: "We go farther, and affirm," he continues, "what no reader of history will contradict, that there never was a nation except the United States, in which some guardianship of the doctrines of religion, and of the forms of worship has not been committed to the civil power." He then goes on to argue, that according to the unerring lights of revelation, and enlightened reasoning, it ought to be so here; a position which no man will contradict "who is a bible-believer." "Did not," says he, "the civil government administer protection and nurture to the church by divine command? Wicked men,

one and all, oppose this doctrine. Will any Godly man take part with them in this unholy warfare?"

Such has been the language uniformly held by this sect of Christians in all times and in all countries where they have obtained a settlement. They seem, indeed, to have been imbued in every age with the spirit of the bloody minded Calvin, who was so much of a Christian that he exulted in having been the cause of *Servitus*' being burned at the stake, because that virtuous man dared to avow opinions that were not exactly conformable to those of his ferocious persecutor. But it was not till lately, that any disposition was shown in this country by other Christian sects to make common cause with the followers of Calvin in endeavoring to effect the establishment of a national religion.

The Calvinists, as preparatory to a national religion, had instituted an American Education Society—a National Tract Society—an American Bible Society—a National Sunday School Union, &c. It only, therefore, remained for the other sects, who had also, though not to the same extent, formed societies of a similar character, to unite these institutions, and to give them such a direction as might accomplish the darling object they had in view. Hence the origin of the "American Tract Society."

That this statement does not rest on conjecture, will appear manifest on referring to the "Report" of the proceedings of the Tract Society, held in Nassau-street, on the 9th of May, 1827. In that report, we have the Rev. A. of the *Presbyterian* church, making a motion, seconded by the Rev. B. of the *Episcopal* church. The Rev. C. of the *Episcopal* church offering a resolution—seconded by the Rev. D. of the *Baptist* church. The Rev. E. of the *Episcopal* church making a proposition—seconded by the Rev. F. of the *Methodist* church. The Rev. G. of the *Dutch* church, saying something—followed by the Rev. I. of the *Episcopal* church.

Thus we have Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Dutch Reformed, &c., proclaiming to the world, and to their blinded and bigoted followers and donors, that harmony is restored among all the different sects of Christians! Although they had been quarreling with each other for hundreds of years to obtain power and influence,—finding their efforts vain as individual or separate bodies, they concluded, rather than lose their object altogether, to agree on a truce—to suspend hostilities—to combine their forces—to make one mighty effort against the rights of conscience and the liberties of the people;—and, having conquered, to sit down and divide the spoil—share the booty—and exercise their ill gotten power.

Become arrogant and presumptuous from success, a Presbyterian priest and Dr. of Divinity, named Ezra Styles Ely, had the effrontery on the last anniversary of American Independence, to deliver a discourse at Philadelphia, which has since been published, containing doctrines manifestly hostile to general liberty—subversive of the national constitution—and destructive of all enjoyments that do not give way to a gloomy and ferocious fanaticism. In this harangue of priestly assurance, the preacher recommends the abolition of all *political* parties in the United States—and the organization of a new and powerful *religious* party; to

be trained and disciplined *as such*, for the express purpose of obtaining the government of the country, and controlling the affairs of the nation. But let this pretended "ambassador of heaven,"—this organ of a foul conspiracy to strangle our liberties, speak for himself:—

"Our rulers," says he, "like any other members of the community, who are under law to God as rational beings, and under law to Christ, since they have the light of divine revelation, *ought* to search the Scriptures; assent to the truth; profess faith in Christ; keep the Sabbath holy to God; pray in private, and in the domestic circle; attend on the public ministry of the word; be baptised; and celebrate the Lord's supper. *None of our rulers have the consent* of their Maker, that they should be Pagans, Socinians, Mussulmen or Deists, the opponents of Christianity; and a religious people should never think of giving them permission, as public officers, to be and do, what they might not lawfully be and do, as private individuals. If a man may not be a gambler, and drink to intoxication in the western wilds, he may not in the seat of government; if he may not with the approbation of their fellow citizens, in a little village in the north deny the true God and eternal life, he may not countenance and support those who deny the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. In other words, our President, Secretaries of the government, Senators, and other Representatives in Congress, Governors of States, Judges, State Legislators, Justices of the Peace, and city magistrates, are just as much bound as any other persons in the United States, to be *orthodox* in their faith."

After thus presuming to be perfectly acquainted with the mind of the Deity, and of his intentions as to Pagans, Deists, and other opposers of Christianity; and after arrogating the right of dictating who should, or should not hold offices of trust in this free country, this "preacher of righteousness," this "meek and humble disciple of the lowly Jesus," proceeds, with the most unblushing confidence, to develop the plan arranged by the leaders of the different sects to effect their object.

"If three or four," he remarks, "of the most numerous denominations of Christians in the United States, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Methodists and Congregationalists for instance, should act upon this principle, our country would never be dishonored with an avowed *infidel* in her national cabinet or capitol. *The Presbyterians alone could bring half a million of electors into the field*, in opposition to any known advocate of Deism, Socinianism, or any species of avowed hostility to the truth of Christianity. If to the denominations above named we add the members of the Protestant Episcopal church in this country, the electors of these five classes of true Christians, united in the sole requisition of APPARENT friendship to Christianity in every candidate for office whom they will support, COULD GOVERN every public election in our country, without infringing in the least upon the charter of our civil liberties. To these might be added in this state and Ohio, the numerous German Christians, and in New-York and New-Jersey, the members of the Reformed Dutch Church, who are all zealous for the fundamental truths of Christianity. What should prevent us from co-operating in such a union as this? Let a man be of good moral character, and let

him profess to believe in and advocate the Christian religion, and we can all support him."

All parties are then called on by this priestly bigot to unite in the great and important purpose of filling the presidential chair, and the seats of our national cabinet, senate, and house of representatives, with those only who will promote the ambitious views of the religious faction. This effected, we are to have a written "*national creed*," to which every one must swear who wishes the favor or protection of government. The clergy and laity of the amalgamated sects, are to wear a "*national costume*;" and "a large extent of western land" is to be appropriated to the use and maintenance of the "*national clergy*." All sects that do not subscribe to the *national creed*, are to be deprived of their present religious liberties—no publications are to be tolerated that avow doctrines opposed to the established faith—and the rack and the gibbet, the natural concomitants of the establishment of this vital Christianity, are to be erected throughout the country, in order to eradicate every thing that bears the resemblance of liberal sentiments.

With these facts before us—with proofs staring us in the face as clear as the sun at noon-day, that a combination of all that is base, and vile, and unprincipled, has been entered into for the avowed purpose of arresting the progress of truth—of crushing the growth of liberal opinions—I cannot allow myself to believe that there is an individual in this country capable of appreciating the value of liberty, who is not prepared, at all hazards, to oppose the arrogant claims, and dangerous purposes and pretensions of an ambitious and designing priesthood. This is the only country in the world where their political influence is held in proper check. For this boon we are indebted to the patriots who framed the constitution, and who shed their blood in resisting an attempt, similar to that now meditated, of bringing this country under the yoke of ecclesiastical domination.

That the cry of war is already sounded by these foes of freedom—that their aim is to reduce the citizens of this country to abject slavery—to submit them to a mammoth and cruel power, which bids defiance to all that is dear to humanity—cannot admit of a moment's doubt. So far, however, from feeling discouraged on account of the combination entered into by these sanctified knaves to overturn our liberties, I rejoice at the attempt; because it exhibits them to the discerning part of the community, stripped of the mask of hypocrisy under which they have so long concealed their nefarious designs; and thus places them in a position where they can be assailed with effect. It was only when they carried on their accursed work under the deceptive cloak of a pretended holiness, that their efforts were to be dreaded. Now that they stand naked before the public as the avowed enemies of our political freedom; as self convicted of aiming at the overthrow of the constitution, I am persuaded that there is too much discernment among the people of this country to be much longer duped and trampled upon by these spiritual tyrants.

VERITAS.

NECESSITY.

MR. EDITOR—If there is such a being as an omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent Deity, who created the universe, there cannot be in that universe any other being who has the power to act freely and independently; for if God is omniscient, he must know every action of man before it is performed. If he is omnipotent, no being can have a power of doing any action contrary to his will; for if he could, such a being would in that instance be his superior: his omnipresence is only a consequence of the two former attributes. But if there is no such being as God in the world, then some men think that we must be free. What do they mean by free? Free to act without rule and controul? There can be no such thing. The material world we see is governed by fixed and invariable laws, and is the mind of man less subject to restraint? Are there no rules by which the conduct of rational beings is regulated? No such things as motives by which a man is impelled to choose one thing in preference to another?

Supposing the world to be governed by a supreme intelligent Being, let us inquire whether he acts by fixed or variable laws; whether by a general or a particular providence. To imagine that the maker of the universe (if such a being exists independent of matter,) either did not, or could not, foresee when he formed it, every possible contingency, and that he did not so dispose the laws of matter and mind as to produce the effects intended, without the necessity of perpetual interference, is to derogate from his wisdom and his power. It is a doctrine which must have originated from a very little mind, but has been believed by many great ones, and being the doctrine of the church, has found many advocates among men of the first-rate talents. But all the talents in the world are not sufficient to make it credible with any one who considers it as applied to God instead of man; to the one it is degrading and insulting; to the other it is flattering and consolatory. The heathens personified these imaginary inferences, and had divinities for every place and every circumstance; and this is the whole secret of the heathen mythology—it is a personification of human qualities; of the operations of nature, or the events of the world. Minerva is wisdom, Æolus is wind, Mars is war, Saturn is time, which eats up its own children, and subject to Fate or Necessity, which is considered as unalterable, and inexorable.

Moses, the first lawgiver who ever ventured to promulgate the unity of the Deity, laid claim to his particular protection for the nation of the Jews, in exclusion of all the rest of mankind, and no doubt the success and continuance of his religion and laws is principally owing to this pious fraud; but every page of his writings which makes the Deity a party to the massacres and murders of the Jewish nation; which supposes him to reject and harden other nations or individuals, is inconsistent with those ideas which we form of an omnipotent and benevolent ruler of the universe. And yet every part of the Jewish and Christian religions supposes the interference of a particular providence, because each of them lays claim to a particular revelation. But are the Persians or the Chinese less creatures of the Deity than the Jews or the Christians? If he did not communicate to them the means of obtaining his favor, will he punish them for not believing what they had no opportunities of

knowing! If he does not punish them, where is the use or benefit of these revelations? And if he only rewards them according to knowledge, is he not partial in the distribution of his kindness? To suppose that the Deity suffers a man to be brought into a difficulty, and then steps in to help him out, is little less than ludicrous; yet we have been seriously told, that such a man was saved from shipwreck, storm, or fire, by a particular interposition of providence. The very words are a contradiction to each other; for providence comes from the Latin word *provideo*, which signifies to foresee, in the limited sense as applied to men; but in its higher application to the Divinity, it means to foresee every thing. Now if the Deity foresaw the man's falling into the difficulty, he must, without doubt, have foreseen the means of extricating him, and have produced both by a regular train of causes and effects, or his knowledge and his power are limited. In all those instances of sudden preservation, the attention of observers is caught by the nearness between danger and death; and that seems to be something more than natural, which is nothing but the operation of cause and effect. If they will but allow that it is not miraculous, the wonder ceases; for that one man should be saved in a shipwreck by laying hold of a plank, requires no further interposition of providence than that the rest should be drowned if the plank could save but one; if it had saved a hundred, then he might be said to have interfered, and to have worked a miracle, for such is the only meaning which we ought to give to a particular providence.

If the laws which regulate matter are fixed and invariable, why are not those of mind, supposing them to result from the same organization; and if this be allowed, then it follows that there is no such thing as liberty opposed to these laws, and that we seem to be free only because we have the power to deliberate; but that our choice is constantly influenced by a motive, and that motive by a series of causes which are lost in eternity, as a watch appears to go by itself until we understand the mechanism by which it is put in motion.

To this opinion many and powerful objections will doubtless be raised: first it will be said to strike at the root of all morality, by inducing men to believe that as they have not the power to avoid doing evil, they may indulge themselves in every species of wickedness. Are there none who do this without believing in necessity? and may not men equally believe themselves impelled to do good? The fallacy of this argument lies in not giving the opposite opinion its full extent; for the principles of morality, which are either implanted by nature, or acquired by imitation and habit, are as much a part of the general system of the moral world, as those propensities and temptations to vice which seduce or impel others; and no motive can operate on man which is not the result of natural causes; therefore we are just as safe from the dangers of vice under the belief of necessity, as if every man believed himself a free agent.

Next, it will be said, that man's own feelings are a direct contradiction to the belief of his actions not being free: "we know," say some, "that every action we perform is either the result of deliberation or of a violent temptation; but in both these cases we feel that the mind is equally free." True it is that we *seem* to have the power of choosing,

because when two things are proposed to us, we must take the one or the other ; and at one period of time they seemed indifferent. Even after our choice, we think we had the power to have chosen the reverse ; but this is fallacious, for we acted from the motive which was *strongest* at the time, and that motive was only the result of impressions, which arise as much from the mechanism of the mind, as seeing does from that of the eye. These motives impelled us to act as much as the heavier weight inclines the balance ; so that we might just as well say we might have acted differently, as say that if the lighter weight had been the heavier it would have turned the balance. As to actions that are trifling, the power to deliberate is so frequently exercised, that in time it ceases to be perceived. In these we seem to act with a greater degree of freedom, but in reality there is not the least difference. Popularly speaking, we are moral and accountable agents, actuated by motives and governed by hopes and fears ; but philosophically speaking, we are mere machines, impelled by a power of which we have no knowledge, nor even any conception. According to the system of necessity, vice is no more in our power than virtue ; we act in both cases under the impressions which certain objects make on our senses, and these senses move our desires ; desires operate on the will ; and the will produces the action. The rectitude or depravity of any man's conduct, therefore, depends on the impressions which he receives in his youth ; for these impressions, frequently repeated, become habits, and form the character of the man : hence will be seen the necessity of a virtuous education. Let no man be alarmed at the idea of his being a mere machine, for at any rate he is not of his own making, and therefore, has no more right to claim a liberty of action, than the right of making himself : he can do nothing which is not intended by a superior power ; and, therefore, he need not fear being impelled to vice by an irresistible propensity ; for if such is the will of providence, it is not in his power to resist, though he may suffer for his imprudence : I will not venture to maintain, that whatever is is right ; but I will affirm that it cannot be otherwise than it is.

Let us then submit with resignation to the present state of things which is established, from a consciousness of its inevitable necessity. This does not forbid the exercise of human virtues or wisdom ; nor can it prevent or increase the operation of vice, for both are parts of the same system. Men whose delicacy, or whose piety, is shocked at the idea of making what they please to call God, the author of evil, are forced to vindicate his goodness at the expense of his power ; and, raising up another, or a rival power whom they term the Devil, make him the cause of all moral evil, while God is only the author of good. A notion so childish could have originated only in the infancy of the world, when men never reasoned on the nature of things, but believed implicitly all they were told ; and when priests were the only depositories of knowledge, and knowledge was derived from any thing but reasoning and experience. Should these opinions be true, they can do harm ; if false, not more than others have which are yet believed. But it is expected, probably, that they should be shewn capable to produce good. First, then, they strike at the root of all bigotry and superstition. Regarding

all systems of religion as the invention of man, they teach resignation to the events of the world as the result of an inevitable necessity; but while they enforce resignation, they by no means prevent exertion.

Finally, these opinions limit the virtues or the exertions of man no farther than they are limited by our nature; and as they teach us that every action of our lives, and every event of the world is the result of an established order of things, they tend to make us more truly moral than any system of superstition, which by continually calling the attention to its pretended author, or to external ceremonies, withdraws our thoughts from the practice of virtue, and substitutes faith for morality.

CLIO.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 1828.

SUNDAY LAW.

At a public meeting held in the Bethel Academy, Elizabeth Street, on the 18th May, 1828, to take into consideration the legal proceedings, adopted by the corporation, to *compel* the observance of Sunday, it was resolved to raise a subscription to defray the expenses of defending two suits brought against one of our citizens, in which verdicts had been obtained; to appeal to the Superior Court for an alteration of these verdicts; and to prepare and support a petition to the Legislature for a repeal of the law compelling the observance of Sunday. A Committee was also appointed to carry these measures into operation.

At a subsequent meeting, held in the same place on 1st June, the following address, drawn up by the Committee, was read and ordered to be printed for distribution:—

ADDRESS.

The late measures adopted by certain sectarians to *enforce*, by the arm of civil authority, the observance of the first day of the week as a day to be kept holy; and the ecclesiastical intrigues and conventions throughout the state for the same purpose, have obliged the "**FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION**," as free citizens of a Free Republic, appreciating their rights, and valuing that freedom claimed by the declaration of rights made by their fathers, and guaranteed by their constitution, to appoint a committee to adopt measures which may counteract the growing evil.

That committee cannot but express their astonishment, that so much apathy should so long have existed in the unresisting submission to the assumed power of the corporate bodies in enforcing ordinances which strike at the rights of man, and which are at variance with every republican principle, consequently, injurious of public morals and public good.

A late manifesto of a society got up expressly for the purpose of obliging the observance of their day to keep it holy, which neither civil right, moral obligation, or religious duty sanctions, is so expressive of a determination to *force* upon their fellow citizens such restrictions, and the adoption of so much of their peculiar tenets and observances, as militate against those rights and liberties of conscience which are natural

and unalienable, that the committee cannot refrain from lifting their voices against it. In doing so, however, they fully disclaim all pretension or wish to persuade any one to the infraction of a day which he conscientiously believes to be holy. They only claim for themselves what they wish to see guaranteed to every one—the right and liberty of judging for themselves in this particular, and not to be compelled to do what they conscientiously believe to be wrong.

In our examination of the ordinance for enforcing the observance of the Sabbath, we are to view it in three lights—as a *civil* ordinance, as a *moral* ordinance, and as a *religious* ordinance.

First, then, as a *civil* ordinance.

Two principles must be here recognized, viz :—that one of the objects of government is to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak ; and that as civil government is but delegated authority for the public good, it can never possess any more power than those who delegate it, and have a right to give.

As then this ordinance requires the observance of a religious day, and by allowing certain other persons because more numerous and powerful, to choose their day, and withholding that right from us, and obliging us to conform to theirs, we cannot but look on it as an act of oppression of the weak by the strong. But numbers cannot justify evil.

This ordinance of our city authorities, we conceive, therefore, does not fulfil that object of government, the protection of the weak ; but rather unites with the strong against the weak. It is “a violation of the equal rights of man—an act of spiritual oppression and intolerance.”

“As no one or any number of the constituents of civil government have a right to dictate their sectarian opinions to any one person, or to any *other portion* of the community, government could never acquire a right to cause any individual or any number of its constituents to violate their own opinions, or to conform to the tenets of others, which they neither profess or believe ; neither could the power ever be delegated to our Legislature by which they could righteously enact a law discriminating between the various and discordant systems of its constituents, giving legal preference to the sectarian opinions of one class to the disparagement of another.” (a)

As one person has no right to do an act which it was not the equal right of the other to retort in kind, “so each and every one is without that right, and all collectively are without it.” Two or more persons, therefore, whose opinion might happen to concur, could have no right to dictate theirs to any one ; for if each and every individual in the community is without the right in question, all *associates* are equally destitute of it as any one.” (b)

● We are told of the necessity “that the convenience of the minority should yield to that of the majority.” Where, however, is the convenience of the majority in this case, that the conscience, rights, property, and convenience of the minority should be trampled upon by usurped authority. The pursuit of their daily bread by a handful, a minority, cannot interfere with, cannot prevent the majority from pursuing what

(a) People's Rights Reclaimed.

(b) Ibid.

they consider their duty, from following the dictates of their conscience : and we do not wish to interfere with the rights of conscience of any man—but we wish our own to be respected.

The fourth of July, Fast-days, and Thanksgiving-days, are annually set aside for their respective purposes, and the citizens are *enjoined* and recommended to observe them : and some persons choose always to resort to houses of worship on those days ; but we hear nothing of ordinances for *compelling* others to do the same, or even of the observance of those days, although to this nation the first of those days has been of more importance than any Sunday could be. We hear nothing of the immorality of buying and selling on those days, or even of playing, and amusements, which are rather encouraged ; nay, they may be considered as days of downright licentiousness, during which more sensuality is practised than on any other three days in the year ; and those days may be considered as much statutory or legal days of rest as any Sunday.

Secondly—As a *moral* ordinance. “ That it is universally admitted that the prevalence of knowledge and virtue among a people is indispensable to elevated and permanent rational prosperity ; and preeminently so for the perpetuity of republican institutions, in a nation so extended as our own in territory, so rich in soil, so multitudinous in numbers, so vigorous in enterprise, and unless restrained by moral power, so sure to be carried by the tide of corrupting abundance to dissoluteness, and effeminacy and ruin,” we agree ; and that a certain portion of the time set apart for the promotion of knowledge and virtue may be of essential benefit, especially to the working class ; and for that purpose a civil institution may be useful. But when its ordinance is obligatory, and *compels* the laying aside of industrious pursuits, without affording any adequate and equally attractive occupation to employ the minds of men, the necessary consequence will be an inducement to vice and immorality, as no ordinance can be enforced in this country compelling people to resort to places of worship ; neither can we suppose, if such compulsory ordinance were enforced, that it would in any way benefit the moral habit and character of any people.

To make the population of a nation, by force, acknowledge any religious observance or form of worship, may make them hypocrites ; but can add nothing to the good propensity of man, to his love of virtue, to his industry, or to his happiness.

That habits of cleanliness and health may be promoted by a proper appropriation of a certain portion of the leisure moments of those who are almost constantly employed in pursuit of their daily bread, there can be no doubt. But that this must necessarily be a seventh part of their whole time, does not appear. That habits of industry are promoted by requiring and enforcing an abstinence from all laborious and industrious occupations under severe pains and penalties, is a direct contradiction of terms. When “ the Sabbath exerts no moral power upon those who withdraw themselves from the duties of it,” and a population is made vagrant by being shut out from labor and industrious pursuits, and are left no choice but between such amusements as may accidentally occur, and a continual melancholy and dreary view of human nature ; which, from the necessary and actual constitution of human nature, will they be most

likely to accept? Will not such an obligatory Sabbath be most likely to impair the moral power, increase temptations, corrupt our virtue, and especially undermine our republican institutions, by opening a way to the introduction of those great curses of European countries, the establishment of State Religion, Ecclesiastical Inquisitions, and the lighting the fire and faggot; and thus, as appears to be the object of our persecutors, "render self-government impossible, and despotism the lesser evil."

Thirdly—An act that is barely immoral on one day, must be so on every other day; but as selling, labor, and amusement, are permitted every other day, they cannot be considered by the government as evils in themselves; they, therefore, must resort to some other reason, which can only be a religious one. If the Mosaic commandment is appealed to, that orders the seventh and not the first; it is not then, according to that commandment, immoral to violate the first. And by the law requiring to keep the first, it implies that it is not immoral to violate the seventh. It therefore makes neither immoral.

"As strange as it may seem, and doubtless is, the law of which we are treating enacts implicit belief in the divine appointment of a Sabbath day, and at the same time by recognizing, nay, by coercing the observance of another than the seventh day of the week as holy time, impeaches the testimony of the only witness relied on for proof of the divine institution of any Sabbath." (c) Is it said that it is immaterial which day is kept? The Mosaic command says otherwise. "When did infinite wisdom find it necessary to change the Sabbath day? Is there a new command? Where? Does God change?" (d)

If the seventh day was appointed by command of God to be kept holy, by what authority is the first day appointed? If the statute alone is sufficient authority for that, the Mosaic command must not be appealed to, but there must some other good reason be shown why it should be instituted, which must be derived from the two first points, viz: as necessary in a *civil* or *moral* view, and it must be proved that the safety of the government and of the majority require the enactment of Sabbath laws, and that playing, or buying, selling, and living by the gain, is worse on one day than on another.

If commerce, canals, and turnpikes, be "annihilating the national conscience in respect to the Sabbath, and rolling the wave of oblivion over that day," as asserted by the aforesaid manifesto, we say, also, that in the same proportion has the human mind become enlightened, the comforts and happiness of the country increased—the enjoyments formerly restricted to a small part of the people, now sent far and wide through the whole population. If then we have gained the benefits and lost nothing more than the superstitious observance of a day formerly dedicated to the worship of the Sun, or Apollo, but substituted by the early Christians because they were once Pagans, in place of the Jewish Sabbath, we shall always hope that commerce, canals, and turnpikes, may continue to increase, and with them the constant increase of those concomitant benefits.

(c) People's Rights Reclaimed.

(d) Ibid.

That the destiny of this nation, and of the world, is deeply and permanently affected by the decision of this question, we cannot doubt; for we cannot doubt that the enforcement of any civil ordinance which requires, in the face of our constitution, the sacrifice of a portion of the time, consequently of the property, of a portion of the community, in order to follow the religious tenets of another portion, and which coerces the observance of the institutions of religion of any party by their fellow citizens, is all important, since it interferes with, and is a direct infringement of those rights, which, as we thought, were secured to us by that constitution.

The committee cannot but think, that were the individual who has undergone prosecution and persecution for maintaining his rights, supported in their maintenance, by appealing to a higher court of judicature, the judgment already given would be reversed, and the ordinance of usurpation of power repealed. They have therefore prepared the following subscription paper, which they lay before the meeting for their sanction and signature; and they further recommend the appointment of a larger committee to obtain the signatures of as many of their fellow citizens as will come forward with them in the maintenance of their rights. If, however, this measure should fail, which the unwarranted sway of ecclesiastical influence may render possible, we have still another resort—an appeal to the authority delegated to legislate for the people, by a petition to that branch of the government.

BENJAMIN OFFEN, *President.*

* * * As the Sunday law operates in every part of this State to the manifest injury of all our citizens, it is hoped that a desire to preserve our rights inviolate, will induce those in the country who are inimical to ecclesiastical usurpation, to aid their brethren in the city in obtaining a repeal of the obnoxious statute. Auxiliary committees might be formed in every town and village, which, by co-operating with the general committee in New-York, might easily raise a sum sufficient for all purposes. Communications on the subject may be addressed, in the meanwhile, to the editor of the *Correspondent*, 422, Broadway.

Free Press Tract Fund.—Although the advocates of liberal principles are opposed to those Bible, Missionary, and Tract Societies, which have been established in this and other countries, the principle on which these Societies proceed cannot but receive their approbation. It is in fact, originated with the friends of civil and religious liberty in Europe, and would, long ere this, have overthrown political as well as spiritual tyranny, had not measures been adopted to restrain the dissemination of all writings calculated to dispel the mists of ignorance.

A plan so excellent and efficient was not to be lost sight of by the priesthood. They immediately perceived that a system so well adapted to operate on the human mind in favor of liberal principles, might, now that its progress had been arrested by the civil power, be acted upon with advantage in aid of religion. Pious tracts were thus substituted for those of a liberal tendency; and that mighty engine, the press, the value of which can only be appreciated when it is employed in diffusing knowledge, has been prostituted to the base purpose of arresting the progress of

science, in order to extend the empire of superstition, and the influence of the priesthood.

The object contemplated by creating this fund, is to counteract the demoralizing effect which the circulation of religious tracts must have on the community. By sending forth writings of a nature suited to open the eyes of the world to the deception practised upon them—to give birth to reflection—to lead to a rational train of thinking—it is not doubted but that *one liberal* tract, while it will be read far more extensively, will have a more powerful effect in rendering mankind better and happier, than *ten thousand* of those religious productions, with which the country is inundated, and which, there is every reason to believe, are loathed by four fifths of the inhabitants.

With these views, the "FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION" respectfully solicit the co-operation of the friends of Truth throughout the United States, who will be supplied with Tracts at cost prices.

Subscribers of \$1, will be entitled to 1000 pages; being ten pages for one cent.

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MISCELLANEOUS.

Dr. Chalmers.—The following is an extract of a letter from a gentleman in Edinburgh to a friend in London, respecting this once celebrated preacher :—

"On this side of the Tweed we have priests of all denominations, among whom one, for his bold and undaunted effrontery, certainly deserves our attention. In the walks of common life, such discrepancy of character would never be overlooked; but a man invested with the forms and functions of a churchman can do any thing; his name is sacred, and his actions dare not to be inquired into. Such are the maxims of theology, else how can we reconcile the conduct of the far famed orator, Dr. Chalmers, who had attained in this country the summit of ecclesiastical fame, but who, at one period of his life, could indulge in the profound speculations of *Atheism*! Fancying, however, that he could fill his coffers better by the abandonment of heresies so unpopular, he betook himself, on a sudden, to the whims and follies of the age, and became by a singular, though rude and boisterous peculiarity, possessed of qualities, which marked him, among his admirers, the first pulpit orator of the day. With these blandishments he has courted the favor of the vulgar, by preaching to them "the tidings of damnation;" while

with a class of a more fastidious and delicate cast, he has gained popularity by the vain attempt, in sermons upon astronomy, to reconcile the glorious discoveries of modern science with the foolish, self-conceited, and gross absurdities of the meek, the well known, and renowned Moses. To the no small disappointment, however, of all pious Christians, this redoubtable hero of theology, after acquiring by a few years calling, means sufficient to allow him to pass his days in a kind of inglorious indolence, has withdrawn himself from the fatigue and labors of the church, to preach moral philosophy to a few country clowns; abandoning his foolish and credulous flock to the same state of sin and misery in which we suppose he found them!"

The Progress of Christian Superstition.

[Continued from page 320.]

Evaristus, succeeded in 110, and commanded that matrimony should be publicly performed in the church, adding the benediction of a priest to it; and without which ceremony, it should be void and null. This Pope entertained a good opinion, it should seem, of the benediction of a priest, on this occasion—no doubt he thought it would be productive of greater increase of children, and give his reverence an additional influence in the family, for ever after.

Peter is said to be the first who formed the Mass and instituted Lent. These institutions have been finely enlarged on since, and very fruitful of superstition and revenue.

Alexander I. succeeded in 118. He added considerably to the ceremonies, or superstitions rather, of the mass; ordering that water should be mixed with wine, before the consecration—that no priest should say more than one mass a day—and that holy water should constantly remain in the churches. This is pretty well for one Pope; but it is hard to say for what purpose he introduced water into wine except he thought it too strong, or wished to imitate his master, and double the miracle. A standing supply of holy water, was a pagan ceremony, and very fit for the promotion of Christianity.

Sextus 1st, came next, and ordered in 130, that sanctus, or holy, should be repeated three times in the mass. When superstition is on the road, it does not know when to stop. It was he also who ordered that none but persons in orders, should handle holy things.

Telesphorus came to be Pope in 140. It was he who instituted midnight mass at Christmas, in honor of one of his Gods having been born about that hour, in a stable!

Hignus succeeded in 152. He was the first to establish the order of god-fathers and god-mothers at christenings and confirmation. This holy institution lasts still, more for the benefit of the priest, than the god-child, and while it is so, it is likely to be continued.

Pius 1st, ordered Easter to be observed on the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the moon in March. This is a sign of change in the times.

Anicetus, began his Papal reign in 165. He forbid the clergy to wear their hair or beards long: This is the origin of crops among the Christians, and is far from being popular in Great Britain and Ireland. He instituted the tonsure, and commanded that the mass should be cel-

celebrated with a round host, made of unleavened bread, and having the figure of Christ, or a crucifix impressed on it. This is doing very well: but what is strange, he was not deified for all these important inventions!

Victor 1st, elected in 192, ordered Easter to be kept on the wane of the moon; differing from his brother, *Pius 1st*, who would have it in the full.

Cesarius, elected in 201, commanded that all the faithful should come to their Easter communion. This Papal edict is still in force, though we find a great falling off in the latter days.

Calixtus 1st, elected in 219, instituted the quarter tenses, and prohibited the Clergy from marrying. This was rather too severe, and in opposition to the precepts laid down in Genesis; but it is piously believed, that the priests have, notwithstanding the Pope's decrees, complied in a great measure ever since, with the injunctions of their Creator.

Urban 1st, became Pope in 224, and substituted gold and silver utensils in the service of the altar, for glass, wooden and earthen ware, and that no man should become a bishop without being first a priest. The French republic has no reason to find fault with this decree; it has been the means of enabling her to carry on the war against the priests at their own expense.

Fabianus in 236 was elected Pope, and instituted the consecration of the Holy Oils on Holy Thursday, ordering the old oil to be burnt. This oil was to grease the young at baptism, and anoint the dying, and must have very singular virtue and great efficacy, no doubt, in consequence of having a certain form of prayer read over it. But there is nothing like keeping up the farce. It is worthy of remark that the older the church grew, the more she dealt in holy things.

Stephen 1st, in 254, planned ornaments for the altar, and cut out the priests' livery. This was the Master Taylor of the church, and did not want for plenty of stuff, if we may judge from the sacerdotal accoutrements now in use.

Dionysius, in 259 divided the Christian world into dioceses and parishes, which division is still unfortunately kept up, for the benefit of priests and proctors.

Felix 1st, would not allow mass to be said but on a consecrated altar, and ordered relics to be placed on at the same time. It was now that stones and bones were getting into vogue, and becoming holy. This good man died in 275, and was very properly made a saint of; for who deserved it better than he who could sanctify skeletons and quarries!

Cayus, in 283, fixed the degrees of holy orders, with a view, no doubt, that the priests should not get too sanctified, all at once.

Marcellus, elected in 304, ordered that no council should be held without the authority of the pope, and instituted the college of cardinals. Here we find his holiness getting strong every day, and we shall soon see what good use the father of the faithful made of his power.

Melchisedes, elected in 311, ordered that no one should fast on Sundays and Thursdays, not to imitate the Gentiles, who held these days holy. He commanded the use of the cross, and lights to be burnt during

mass; thus, while he wishes to avoid the superstitions of the Gentiles, he falls into greater himself. But as they were Christian, there was no harm in them!

Sylvester 1st, in the time of Constantine, ordered that bishops should bless the holy oils, and administer the sacrament of confirmation. He ordered also that the altars should be made of stone. Under this auspicious reign, we find that bishops are taking the lead of, and the power from the priests; they get the exclusive power of making oil holy, and confirming the faithful;---privileges they have never since parted with.

Marcus came to the pontifical chair in 336, and ordered that in high masses, after the Gospel, the creed should be sung. This mass is like the Spanish Olla Podrida; every new comer threw in his scrap or mite, and now may, with great propriety, be called a mass of Papal superstitions.

Julius 1st, succeeded to *Marcus* in 336, and decreed that all causes belonging to Ecclesiastics should be tried by a judge of their own. This looks well on the part of his holiness; he draws a line of distinction in judicial affairs, between the laity and Clergy, and he did it with a view, most probably, of screening the vices of churchmen from the profane eye of the public.

[To be continued.]

Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-Street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 15th instant, at half past ten o'clock, forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Society of Free Enquirers.—This society now holds its meetings in the Long Room, No. 168 Chatham-street, where lectures are regularly delivered every Sunday afternoon at 8 o'clock.

N. B.—There is an entrance to the room also in James-street.

Free Debating Institution.—A society under this title has been organized in this city, for the purpose of discussing philosophical, political, and theological questions. It is open to all parties, and holds its meetings in the room occupied by the Society of Free Enquirers. On Sunday (to-morrow) evening, the chair will be taken at 7 o'clock; and on the Mondays following at the same hour.

The following question which has already undergone an animated discussion, and been twice adjourned, will be again taken up to-morrow evening:—

“Does the ascendancy of the Christian Priesthood of the present day throughout the United States tend, or not tend, to subvert the rights and liberties of the Republic?”

Gentlemen of the Pulpit, of the Bar, and others, are requested to attend.

“Discussion rubs off the rust of prejudice, and leads to Truth.”

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THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 22.

NEW-YORK, JUNE 21, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY.

MR. EDITOR—Is it right for our ministers to preach against Sabbath-breaking, and break it themselves every time they exchange, by riding on Sunday morning to their exchanged places of service?

Ought they not, as well as the rest of the world, to use secular days to prepare for Sunday duties?

May they not, with perfect ease, as well exchange food and lodgment for selves and horses, as travel and service?

Is there the least apology for their riding on Sunday morning, because they go to places of worship, more than for any traveller to travel on Sunday from place to place of public worship?

Before, therefore, they call travelling in carriages or on horseback, on Sunday, from one meeting house or church to another, Sabbath-breaking, do they not rather behove to cease themselves from travelling on the Sabbath, or rather Sunday. Those that say thou shalt not steal, do they commit adultery?

Had not our clergy better establish the point, that *Sunday* is absolutely *holy time*, before they preach against the breach of it?

Did God and Old Testament ever "hallow" any other than the *seventh day*? "God blessed the SEVENTH DAY and *hallowed* it.

Have we any right to *secularize* a day that God *consecrated* by a divine command?

Does it need so much as half an eye to perceive that the "commandments of men" may as well abrogate, disannul, or abolish *all* the precepts of the decalogue as *any one of them*?

Are not "Seventh day Baptists" more right than any Christians in the observance of the proper day for public rest and worship?

Did Christ and the New Testament ever *unhallow* (so to speak) the day that the Lord "blessed and hallowed"?

Did not Paul countenance the *equal estimation* of all days—directing that "every man behoved to be fully persuaded in his own mind" as to days, as it was *indifferent* which day he observed?

Is it on bible record that Christ or the New Testament ever commanded *Sunday to be kept as holy time* more than other days? Every day should be kept in the same manner.

Does it appear that the first Christians met *peculiarly* on Sunday? They met some part of every day, as in many places Christians do now. Sunday was a *peculiar day* only for *breaking of bread*; that is *for the*

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper—not for any public worship of theirs more than other days.

Did not *John Calvin*, the father of the Reformation, view all days alike—holy only in time of divine service? After church he used to take his gun and go shooting birds.

Are not the Quakers, and many Baptists, and all Sandamonians perfectly right in considering *all days as holy time*, both as to *goodliving* and the worship of God?

And once for all, would not our ministers do far better to leave the "schemes of men," in relation to this and that and the other project, and attend to their own avocations?

ABUSE OF LIBERALS.

MR. EDITOR.—How great an outcry has been set up of late, by those canting pretenders to piety and religion, the Editors of the fanatical Journals, and their correspondents, against what they term infidelity and its supporters. And for what? because it attacks the existing abuses of religion, which are their (the Editors) and their patrons only source of emolument, and from which they derive all their power: and what does all this outcry amount to? Not a refutation of the principles adopted by Liberals, but an abuse of all who are honest and bold enough to avow and defend them. What is it that Liberals want? Do they want to create anarchy and confusion in the nation, that they may profit by such a state of affairs? Do they want to undermine and destroy the bonds of civil society? Do they want to erase from the minds of mankind all moral restraint and influence, that they may indulge with impunity in all the irregular desires to which human nature is subject? They do not. Let any one examine their publications; and, if he is a candid and impartial reader, he must admit, that the very reverse of all this is constantly inculcated and enforced. And would this be the case were their sentiments in unison with what is laid to their charge by bigots and fanatics? It is impossible. They would not advise even-handed justice to be administered to all; they would not enforce the strictest morality: insist on the sacredness of personal property; the obligation we lay under to assist all and injure none, were they not convinced that all these are essential to the well-being of society, and that no community could exist without them.

Again, could it be supposed that in this enlightened state of society, any one should be so dead to all feelings of humanity as to advise the adoption of punishment for a difference on theological subjects? Liberals have reasons as good for believing in their systems, as Christians, or the majority of Christians have for believing on the credit of others what they have never examined. An opposer of Christianity examines with impartiality the different opinions of men, and adopts the most consistent. He is convinced from the evil he sees in the world, that it is not under the immediate superintendence of an infinitely good and almighty Being. He is convinced that what cannot be destroyed must be eternal. He also considers it more consistent to believe and assert that the universe is eternal, than to suppose that this earth was made six thousand years ago from nothing, and that the sun,

moon and stars were made also from nothing, to give light to the new made earth ! He looks also at the religions on the earth, and they are not few, and he sees them all laying claim to a divine origin, and denouncing all others as false and damnable. Viewing them impartially, he sees them introduced by fraud, established by war and bloodshed, and the source of most of the evils that afflict mankind. Hence his reasons for rejecting them all as false and delusive. He considers that his chief employment ought to be to advance his own happiness, and, as much as lays in his power, the happiness of others. And how can we do this effectually but by letting mankind know that their happiness depends on their own exertions, and not on the will of a capricious being as easily irritated as themselves ; that if they will be happy, they must adopt the means to secure it, by performing the duties devolving on them as good citizens towards each other ; by observing the laws which are made for their mutual benefit ; and by resisting every attempt that is made to deprive them of their liberties.

As a great part of mankind do not know their rights, those that do know them would be wanting in their duty if they refused to impart that knowledge to others. We advance the happiness of our fellow creatures by telling them that all men are born with equal rights ; that they ought to be governed by men of their own choice ; that their property and persons ought to be secured by laws of their own making ; that if any man or set of men attempt to oppress them, they have not only a right to resist, but resistance becomes a sacred duty ; that priests and despots are inimical to their happiness, for they have always been confederated to oppress their deluded supporters ; that they have a right to change any system of Government that excludes the majority of the people from having a voice therein : that they have a right to speak and publish their opinions on all subjects : and that all attempts to prevent them are oppressive, unjust, and tyrannical.

These opinions I have adopted, and I wish to communicate them to others. I shall do it wherever or whenever I have the opportunity. I am proud to avow myself a Liberal. I feel that I stand on firm ground ; that I have imbibed principles which cannot be shaken or confuted ; and all the abuse of hireling scribes will not daunt me.

W. V. H.

SPIRITUALITY.

MR. EDITOR.—The doctrine of spirits evidently originated with the notion, propagated by Pythagoras and others, that all matter was indestructible, and that, when one kind of animal died, the matter of its body dispersed and formed a part of another living body. The notion, in the first instance, was correct in part ; that is, to the dispersion of one body and its mingling with other bodies ; but the attempt to keep up a continuous identity was the great ground of error, and the origin of the superstition of the spiritualist.

The most common understanding may learn in a moment, that all animals continue to consume food, and that the matter, which passes into the stomach as food, receives a change, and passes part one way and part another through every pore and passage of the body. The same

body does not always exist to expel the new food : but the new food successively forms new parts of the body, and these new parts expel those which are old and decayed. Thus the body keeps in action as a perfect machine, until some injury or decay stops all its motions. This motion keeps up what is called life ; for life is nothing more than this continual motion ; this constant change and interchange of the body. Every sensation has the same foundation ; and the congregation of sensations constitutes what we call mind. Thus it is that different organizations exhibit different characters, and that different habits feel different sensations, which form different minds. Thus it may be seen how it is we constantly crave food ; and how it is, if we do not get sufficient food to apply to the stomach and keep the body in action, that we languish and die ; or, in other words, we are starved to death : the machine of self is stopped.

This action of the body, rightly understood, explains how pains are occasioned : that blows or wounds inflicted on any particular part, stop the healthy action of that part, and, according to their severity, affect the whole body ; for an action impeded in one part throws the necessary excretion on another part. Pains of the bowels, the stomach, the head, are occasioned by a congregation of some foul matter, which those particular parts cannot throw off with sufficient effect, and are thereby deranged in their proper actions. Thus it is that a man who overloads his stomach, is in a state of fever, until his stomach has digested and dispersed the superabundance. Thus it is that a man gets intoxicated. He drinks to excess, and the excess in his stomach generates a superabundance of gas that flies to his head and deranges all his faculties. A Chemist, by filling a room with a given quantity of a particular gas, could intoxicate a whole company without liquor, and make them play strange pranks.

The simple accidents by which life is lost, prove to a certainty that life is nothing more than the action of the body, and that all which constitutes mind or sensation is extinct the moment the life is extinct. Life is sensation ; and death is a cessation of that sensation. Experience proves this in the animal world, and also that vegetables have some peculiar sensations : as they propagate and live nearly on the same principle with animals. In fact, animals are but a sort of vegetables with the power of loco-motion ; and vegetables are a sort of animals that cannot move themselves : the one receives the matter for its nourishment and carries it in its stomach, moving from place to place ; the other must be fixed and imbedded to receive its nourishment through its roots. There is a strong similarity in what constitutes life in both : for both are nourished by, and excrete matter in the same manner ; only different kinds of matter. The foul air which animals excrete, forms a peculiar nourishment for vegetables ; and the air excreted by vegetables is extremely wholesome to animals. In short, they are evidently qualified to be food for each other ! Dead animal matter is proper food for living vegetables, and living vegetables, or vegetables just separated from their soil, are proper food for animals. All animals who feed on animal matter, are of a grosser nature, and constitute what we call beasts of prey.

The Materialist argues, and argues demonstratively, that matter and motion is the cause of every effect. Point to any effect, and the Materialist will explain to you how it is caused by matter and motion. If he fails to do it in the most precise manner, it is because he is not yet perfect in the science of matter and motion; but whoever has studied that science a short time, arrives at the most complete conviction that all is matter, and that all effects are caused by motions of matter. I have spoken of perfection in this science. It is unattainable; man's sphere of action, and even of observation, is confined, and consequently his ability is there confined.

But it may be asked, why do men, who call themselves Spiritualists, continue to shun the demonstrations of the Materialist when they themselves have no demonstration; no proof of identity; not even an approach to correctness of opinion; not even a pretence to truth? The answer is clear: the preacher finds it a *profitable* delusion; and the hearer, like the drunkard, finds it, for the time, a pleasing delusion! It is the opium of the mind; it tickles and amuses the fancy; it drowns momentary pains; but it ends in being a diminution of health and pleasurable sensations! The devotee is always distracted when free from the reverie, and never in a natural and healthful state! It is a useless life—a living death! The stream of the mind is perverted from its natural and reasonable channel; the current loses its vigour by losing its banks; and after dashing against a thousand obstacles, ends in forming a fetid and poisonous marsh, that sends forth, with the winds, its foul exhalations to corrupt and destroy humanity! C.

THE LIFE OF DAVID.

David was at this time seized with a temporary fit of gratitude towards a lame son of his old friend Jonathan, named Mephibosheth: to whom he restored all the private patrimony of his grandfather Saul; and took him into his family, (2 Sam. ix. 1,) &c.—But this was not lasting; for upon an accusation preferred against him by his servant, David readily bestowed all Mephibosheth's possessions upon that servant, (ch. xvi. 4;) yet when the accusation was found to be false, instead of equitably punishing the asperser of innocence, and instead of reinstating Mephibosheth in his former favour, he restored to him but half the forfeiture for his supposed guilt, (ch. xix. 29:) leaving the villain Ziba in the quiet possession of the other half, as the reward of his treachery.

The next memorable act recorded of David, is the only acknowledged crime that he ever committed: all his other transactions being reputed *right in the eyes of the Lord*, (1. Kings. xv. 5.) compared with (1 Chron. xxi i.)

In the midst of an obscure detail of smiting and slaying, in revenge of the contemptuous treatment of some ambassadors, sent by him with compliments of condolence, but who were considered as spies: while Joab was with the army prosecuting the siege of Rabbah, a chief city of the Ammonites; David, then at Jerusalem, walking one evening on the roof of his palace, perceived, from that eminence, a handsome woman bathing herself, (2 Sam. xi. 2.) Fired with the sight, he sent to inquire

who she was? and understanding she was Bathsheba, wife of Uriah, who was at that time opportunely absent in the army under general Joab, he caused her to be brought to him directly, [no ceremony in the case] and after gratifying his inclination sent her home again, (v. 4.) Some time after, the woman finding herself with child, naturally informed the king of it. He, never at a loss for ways and means, immediately ordered Uriah home, (v. 6;) of whom he inquired news concerning the operations of the campaign: and then dismissed him to his own house: sending after him a present of victuals. (v. 8.) David intended the good man a little relaxation from the fatigues of war, that he might kiss his wife, and be cheated into a child more than he had a natural right to: but whether Uriah had received any information of the honor his majesty had done him; or whether he honestly meant the self-denial he professed, we are not told; however, Uriah would not go home, but slept in the guard room with the king's servants, (v. 9.) David took care to be informed of this, and questioned Uriah concerning the reason of it. Uriah urged a scruple of conscience against going to enjoy any indulgence at home, while the ark, Joab, and the army remained in the tents in the open field. (Ver. ii.) He was detained another night; and David made him drunk, waiting to see what effect that might have. It was still the same. Uriah would not go home. David finding him so untractable, altered his plan of operations, and determined then to get rid of him forever. To which intent, he sent him back to the camp with a letter to the general, *And he wrote in the letter, saying, set ye Uriah in the fore front of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten and die.*" (Ver. 15.) This was accordingly complied with, (v. 17;) and then Bath-sheba, like Abigail before, was taken into David's seraglio, (v. 27.)

Nathan the prophet, read David an arch lecture upon this subject (ch. xii. 1.) and he, who took care not to disagree with his best friends, bore with the reproof, and humbled himself accordingly.

It is hoped the supposition may be allowed, that the noise this righteous affair made, might be one motive for Joab's desiring David to come and partake of some of the honors of the campaign; (2 Sam. xii. 27. 28.) an opportunity which he imprudently laid hold of; but fatal was his presence wherever he appeared.

How shall a person subject to the sensations of humanity, (a security of more avail among men than the most binding laws) how shall a man not steeled to a very Jew, find expressions suited to the occasion when he relates the treatment of this poor city Rabbah? The study would be as difficult as unnecessary; the simple unexaggerated tale, if seriously attended to, will shock the humane reader sufficiently. The city of Rabbah was taken and plundered; and David brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws and under harrows of iron, and under oxes of iron, and made them pass through the brick kiln: and thus did he unto all the children of Ammon (2. sam. xii. 31) (1 Chron. xx. 3. The precise punishments here alluded to, are not understood at this time; writers being much divided in their expositions of these words; but that extraordinary punishments are meant, cannot admit of a doubt, for Josephus writes that *the men were put to death by ex-*

quisite torments. And is it *thus* the people of God, headed by a man peculiarly stiled the man after God's own heart, ~~used~~ prisoners of war?

It would not be easy to select any period of any history more bloody; or abounding more in wickedness of various dyes than that which is the object of the reader's present attention. Instances succeed so quick, that the relation of one is scarcely concluded before fresh ones obtrude upon notice.

Amnon, one of our hero's sons, ravished his sister Tamer, and then turned her out of doors, (2 Sam. xiii. 14.) Absalom, her brother by the same mother, seemingly took no notice of it, until *two years after*; when he invited all his brothers to a feast at his sheep-shearing; where he made Amnon drunk, and murdered him, (v. 28:) so deliberately, and yet so determined was his revenge! Absalom, on this account, fled out of Judea for three years, (v. 38;) until, at the entreaty of Joab, he was invited home again by his father, whose favorite he was. (Ch. xiv. 21, 24.) But though he returned to Jerusalem, yet would not his father see him for two years, more. (ver. 28.)

Absalom, during his exile, conceived a design for deposing his father; for after their reconciliation his first attention was to render himself popular. To this end, he set up a splendid equipage. (2 Sam xv. 1;) but politician like increased his affability with his magnificence: rising up early, and planting himself in the way, to salute all who came to his father's levee. Of these he kindly enquired their business, or grievances; throwing out hints of the king's remissness in the execution of justice; and how uprightly he would conduct himself, were their causes to be determined by *him*, (v. 2, 4.) Piety is universally, and was in particular among this people the safest disguise for roguery. When Absalom, therefore, thought his scheme sufficiently ripe for execution, he desired leave of his father to go to Hebron, to perform a vow made by him while a refugee in Syria, (v. 7.) At Hebron he set up his standard, and his followers assembled in such numbers, and the dissatisfaction was so general, that David thought it prudent to retire from Jerusalem, (v. 12, 14.)

With him he took all his family and dependents except ten concubines whom he left in his palace to keep house. The priests, with the ark, would also have gone with him; but he ordered them to remain in the city as spies, to send him intelligence how matters went. Ahitophel, his prime minister, joined the malecontents; to balance which misfortune David prevailed on Hushshai, a trusty man of some importance, to remain in the city, to ingratiate himself with Absalom; counteract the counsels of Ahitophel, and transmit intelligence to him from time to time, through the conveyance of the priests Zadok and Abiathar, whose sons were to carry on the correspondence. Having concerted matters thus, he evacuated Jerusalem, and Absalom entered it.

When David was upon his journey from the city, he was overtaken by Ziba, servant to Mephibosheth, with asses and provisions for his majesty's accommodation in his retreat, and when David inquired why Mephibosheth did not come with him, this treacherous servant told him that he had staid behind, hoping to obtain the kingdom of his grandfather, dur-

ing this disturbance, v. 3: by which he gained a grant of all his master's possessions.

Here an opportunity may be taken to introduce a circumstance, which is so far material, as it serves to shew, that the sanctity of David was not quite so universally assented to, while he was living as may be imagined, and his actions not only fresh in memory, but better known than was prudent to transmit to these distant ages.

As David prosecuted his flight, he was met by a man of Saul's family, whose name was Shimei. This man as he came on, kept muttering curses between his teeth, and at length cast stones at the king and his attendants, calling out to him; *Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Balial: the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned, and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom, thy son: and behold thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man.* (2 Sam. xvi. 7. 8.) This is pathetic, and truly characteristic of the tyrant to whom the speech was addressed: Some of his retainers were at the point of silencing this brawler, by taking off his head; but David prevented it, wisely considering that this was not a season for proceeding to extremities.

Absalom, in the mean time, being come to Jerusalem, like a buck of spirit took the damsels which his father had left to keep house, and incestuously cuckolded the old man, by way of bravado, on the top of it, in a tent erected for that purpose!

Ahitophel was for selecting twelve thousand men, and pursuing David directly before he had time to recover his surprise, which was certainly the most politic resolution that could have been formed. But Hushai, as was concerted, proposed a different plan of operations: opposing to the former the well known valor and military skill of the old king, and the hazard of making him and his men desperate. He advised a collection of all the troops in the kingdom, that success might be in a manner insured: and that Absalom should command them in person. By which means he affirmed that they should overwhelm David and his party wherever they might be found, (2 Sam. xvii. 12, &c.) Thus ended the council of war; Hushai gained the ascendancy; and when he knew that his scheme was accepted, he gave immediate notice to the priests, with instructions how David should conduct himself, (v. 16 :) David divided his forces into three bodies; commanded by Joab, Abishai, and Ittai; but by the prudent care of his men, he was not permitted to hazard his person by being present in action, (ch. xviii. 1, 2, 3,) When he had reviewed his forces, he gave his generals especial charge to preserve the life of Absalom; and with a policy that reflects honor upon his military knowledge, expected the enemy in the wood of Ephraim; a situation the most judicious that could be chosen, for a small army to encounter one more numerous. David's men were tried veterans, among whom were the remains of those who served under and lived with him at Gath, (2 Sam. xv. 18,) whereas, Absalom's army must have consisted chiefly of fresh men. The battle was decided in favor of David, with great slaughter of the rebel army: and as Absalom fled on a mule, his hair, celebrated for its beauty and quantity, became

entangled in the boughs of an oak, and he remained suspended in the air ; while his mule ran away from between his legs. He was observed in this condition by a man who went and told Joab ; and he, who consulted the safety of David rather than his paternal weakness in behalf of an unnatural son, killed Absalom with a dart.

David grieved immoderately for this reprobate son, on whom he had misplaced a great affection ; and though he had *acted* the mourner on several former occasions, this is the only one in which his sincerity need not be questioned. It is true he might be really sorry at the murder of Abner ; but then the time must be attended to ; Abner was killed prematurely ; he had not finished his treacherous negotiation, David had much to hope from him ; but, when his expectations had been answered, it is far from being improbable, when we consider his treatment of the Amalekite, and of Rechab and Baanah, that he would have found an opportunity himself to have got rid of a man on whom he could have placed no reliance. But to return.

David was roused from his lamentations by the reproaches of his victorious general, who, flushed with success, told him the truth, but perhaps told it too coarsely. It is evident that Joab now lost the favor of his master, of which the murder of Abner, the killing Absalom in direct contradiction to David's express order, and lastly, his want of sympathy and his indelicacy in the present instance, were the undoubted causes.

After the battle, he invited Amasa, Absalom's general to return to his duty ; very imprudently and unaccountably promising him the chief command of his army instead of Joab ; seemingly but an unthankful return for the victory that officer had just gained him, and for his attachment to his interests all along. Amasa, it is true, was a near relation : but Joab, according to Josephus, stood in the same degree of consanguinity ; they being both sons of David's sisters : this offer must therefore have been influenced by the personal qualities of the man ; the importance of gaining him over, he being a person of great power and authority ; and a resentment against Joab, for the death of Absalom.

[To be continued.]

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 1828.

Sabbath Society.—The recent formation of a Society in this city, for the avowed purpose of *compelling*, according to certain puritanical forms, the observance of Sunday, renders it no longer a matter of doubt that the prosecution of Mr. Chambers was instigated by the persons composing that society. When we look at the list of names of which it is composed, we at once recognise the "honourables, the esquires and the reverends," who have been the most active in establishing those engines of spiritual despotism, the bible, missionary, and tract societies, by which the people of the United States are fleeced, on the most moderate calculation, of TWENTY MILLIONS of dollars annually, to support a useless, arrogant, and intolerant priesthood ! We have been much gratified to observe that, although the daily papers published in this city have meanly crouched to the dictum of the prosecutors, and even applauded the late decision of the inferior court, as to the Sunday law, a

different course has been pursued by the editors of the country journals, a great proportion of whom loudly reprobate the proceedings as unconstitutional and oppressive. Even many of them, embarked in defending the prevailing religion, do not hesitate to pronounce the whole as antichristian, and as indicating an intention on the part of the movers to prostrate the liberties of our country. The following remarks, from a paper published in Boston, entitled "A Cry from the Four Winds," (which we noticed in a former number) and which, we are informed, is edited by a gentleman of the *Methodist* persuasion, are of the nature to which we allude.—They contain an avowal of sentiments seldom to be met with in a sectarian paper; and we have no doubt they will afford gratification to our readers. After approving, on various grounds, a respect for the Sabbath, the writer states that he heartily disapproves of of the measures that have been lately adopted to promote, what is called, a proper observance of that day, for the following reasons :

1st. The formation of this society is evidently neither more nor less than a part of the schemes of orthodoxy in its attempts at universal empire. It is designed and calculated to have the same bearing as the American Sabbath School Union—Tract Society—Bible Society—Temperate Society, &c. The *professed* objects of all these societies are but secondary; something more *elevated* and more *dear* to the hearts of the projectors and movers of these societies lies hid from the view of superficial observers. The Scribes and Pharisees were very pompous in their attention to the mint and the anise and the cummin, though they omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith. And why did they pay such scrupulous attention to these minor points? Because in this way they made a great show of religion, secured the high opinion of a great many people, obtained a place in Moses' seat, and in the uppermost rooms at feasts, and in the chief seats in the synagogues, and were gseeted in the markets, and were called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. These were the orthodox of that day. *Their* cause was the cause of God, and those who refused to co-operate with them, were of course fighting against God. It is just so with our modern orthodox Pharisees. Their object is the same, viz: *Religious supremacy*. And their plans of operation differ only as the case requires.

2dly. This society is superfluous. The whole Christian church is a society for the promotion of a due observance of the Christian Sabbath, and every man and every woman who has become a member of that church, have each already given their solemn pledge to keep holy the Sabbath day, and to be neither directly nor *indirectly* concerned in its profanation. They have also professed to believe that a violation of this solemn covenant will expose them to the displeasure of heaven, with all its consequences.

3d. It is a foul slander on the whole body of Christian professors. It supposes that they will be more influenced by *temporal* considerations, than by *spiritual* ones, and that it is in vain to expect them to abstain from a profanation of the Sabbath, either from a conviction of duty, from love to God, from fear of his displeasure, or even from the dread of everlasting damnation. That some more powerful motives must be

pressed upon them, and that these motives must be of a temporal nature, or they never will be influential.

It is a libel on our whole country, by representing it to be so far sunk in moral degradation as to be lost to religion and religious institutions, and to be on the very verge of moral destruction. And yet these very same people are continually boasting of the wonderful progress of religion. Their public journals are every week crammed with numerous details of revivals and conversions. Thousands and thousands and thousands are represented as continually pressing into the kingdom of heaven. The prosperity of the church is said to be unparalleled by the history of past ages; and the signs of the times are declared to be so glorious as to give unequivocal evidence that the millennial day has actually commenced. They who can reconcile these contradictory statements, may doubtless give their hearty concurrence to the measures of those who make these statements.

5th. This society casts a foul reflection on Christianity itself. It is founded on the supposition that the sanctions which God has given to a proper observance of the Sabbath, and the penalties which he has annexed to its violation, are not suitable, or at least are insufficient, and that the institutions of Christianity, which are the means God has appointed to impress these things on the world are not sufficient to answer the end for which they were designed. In short, that God is not able to legislate for the world. That his councils are weak, and his measures inefficient, and that he needs assistance in the mighty work of universal government. When Jesus Christ sent forth his apostles to evangelize the world, it was to be done by preaching the gospel, and that not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be of none effect, much less by political intrigues. A plain statement of the precepts and doctrines of the gospel, with the rewards and punishments annexed to a compliance or non-compliance with its requirements, have ever been considered as more efficacious in evangelizing and moralizing the world than all the laws that can be invented by men, or the most dreadful punishments that can be inflicted by mere civil authority. If men will not obey the Almighty, they certainly will not obey one another. When the authority of Jehovah fails, in vain will men lift up their puny arms.

6th. This society has a *lie* on the very face of it. It disavows all coercion, and yet men are to be *ruined* in their circumstances except they comply with the measures of this society. This is to be effected by the dexterous management of *capital and patronage*. O RARE CHRISTIANITY!! REFINED SPIRITUALITY!!!

7th. Such measures are calculated to produce a reaction. The men who are thus attacked in their business may rally their forces in self-defence, and no doubt they will, and they will be perfectly justifiable in so doing. And where will this contention end? In the triumph of the party which can command the greatest capital, and time only can show which that party is.

Suppose the Sabbath society should triumph, what have they gained? Temporal advantage.—Have they convinced these Sabbath breakers of the error of their ways? No, no such thing,—they have only conquered

them with their own weapons, and perhaps implanted in their minds a deadly enmity to that religion with which this society is identified.

8th. On the principles on which this society is formed, there will be no end to the formation of societies ; we shall need a society for the suppression of lying, another for the suppression of stealing—swearing—cheating—covetousness—gambling—a society for the *proper* attendance at orthodox churches, &c. &c. to infinity,—and above all, shall we not need a society for the prevention of the publication of improper books, pamphlets, &c. especially that vile publication, *THE CRY FROM THE FOUR WINDS*.

But why not lay the axe at the *root* of the tree at once, and form a society to draw up articles of faith and rules of life to be of universal application ! And why not raise an immense capital sufficient to *enforce* those articles and rules, not by *coercion* but by *persuasion*, such as having no kind of dealing with men who refuse to be religious. God would not doubt give his *blessing* to such a society just as quick as he would to a half-way society, designed merely to promote the proper observance of one solitary commandment. We should then be driving business on a large scale ; we should not only have our religious stage coaches and steam boats, but also religious taverns, turnpikes and rail-ways, religious grist mills, saw mills and cotton factories, religious bakers, butchers and milk-men, barbers, boot blacks and window cleaners, scavengers and sweep O's.

By such a pious coalition and simultaneous movement, every man would be *persuaded* either to become religious, or seek an asylum in some other community, where *irreligion* was tolerated.—No man, of course, could be a member of this society, who had a wife or child irreligious, except they were immediately driven from under his roof in true orthodox style. No woman could be a member of this society who persisted in the *wickedness* of living with a man with whom she had been united in the bonds of wedlock, if he was not religious and refused to become so, and it is questionable whether she could be allowed to nurse her little one except it had upon it *some appearance* of the mark of election, and gave some evidence of having within it the genuine *seeds* of grace.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Fanaticism.—In a late London paper, we find the following particulars of a well known fanatic, who, we believe, avowed himself a disciple of Baron Swedenbourg. Mr. Blake, (observes the writer) in our hearing, with, apparently, the powers of reasoning on the objects before him, as clearly, distinctly, and rationally as the most sane logician, has declared, that he had frequently seen and conversed with the ancient kings and prophets. With David, Saul, Hezekiah, and other great personages mentioned in Holy Writ : nay, that he drew their portraits in his sketch-book, which portraits we have seen. Seeing is believing, saith the adage. We have seen these—ergo, we believe, as

aforesaid, that Mr. Blake thought that he had seen, and confirmed the fact by sketching their portraits.

In illustration of which, it may be worth relating here, that which he related to us, namely—That the first time he saw King Saul, he was clad in armour. That his helmet was of a form and structure unlike any that he had seen before, though he had been in the armouries of all nations since the flood. Moreover, that King Saul stood in that position which offered only a view in part of the said helmet, and that he could not *decently* go round to view the whole.

Thus the sketch of the helmet,—for artists have a rule not to touch at home upon that which they have sketched abroad, neither from nature or the life; this rule, Mr. Blake invariably maintained, wherein the material of his art was exercised upon those of his sitters, who were immaterial. This sketch of the helmet then remained as he first sketched it—incomplete. ‘Some months after’ (this first sitting,) said Mr. Blake, ‘King Saul appeared to me again, (when he took a second sitting,) and then I had an opportunity of seeing the other part of the helmet.’ We saw the said helmet when completed, and, in sober truth can assert, that the helmet and the armour are most extraordinary!

Mr. Blake had a conversation with a *flea*, which, on being related to us, naturally enough reminded us of the saying of the great Napoleon, “that from the sublime to the ridiculous—was but a step.” The flea communicated to Mr. Blake what passed, as related to himself, at the *creation*—‘It was first intended,’ said the flea, ‘to make me as big as a bullock; but then when it was considered, from my construction, so armed, and so powerful withal, that in proportion to my bulk, (mischievous as I now am) that I should have been a too mighty destroyer; it was determined to make me—no bigger than I am.’ It must, in justice to the genius and professional renown of Mr. Blake, be added, that he made a drawing, composed in a poetic mood, of this little pernicious *vampire*, enlarging it to the figure of a man, encased in armour, folded somewhat analogously to the rhinoceros-like coat of the flea, and denominated it—*The Man Flea*; and, to speak without *hyperbole*, it is indubitably the most ingenious and able personification of a *devil*, or a malignant and powerful *fiend*, that ever emanated from the inventive pencil of a painter.

In a book of autographs, in the possession of the librarian of the London Institution, is the autograph of this artist, who has added to a very clever drawing, ‘William Blake, born in 1765, and died several times since!’

The Progress of Christian Superstition.

[Continued from page 326.]

Felix 2d, in 355, ordered that in future, no churches should be consecrated, but by Bishops.—It was very fit indeed, they should bless their own houses, as they were to have the principle share of the emoluments.—It is worthy of notice, how rapidly the *episcopal power* was growing since Constantine came to the throne—He found the Bishops as useful then as Kings find them now—They pray for the Royal Family.

Damosius 1st, was chosen in 367. He added the confession to the mass, and ordered the Psalms to be sung in verse, adding, *glory be to the father, &c.* and he had a right to be thankful for the plenitude of power and glory he had obtained; for surely, little could the *cod-dragger* St. Peter, think, that his successor, in the course of 367 years, should be so *eminently* seated!

Siricius was elected in 385. He decreed that Bigamists should not become Priests, thinking very properly, that *too many* women would take up *too much* of their time.

Anastatius 1st, chosen in 398, commanded that every body should stand up when the gospel was read. This gentleman seems to have been a piece of a *Martinet*, and began to *drill* the faithful pretty soon—These *tactics* have been wonderfully improved on since, as may be seen on *review* days in the holy church.

Zosimus was promoted in 417. He invented the *holy wax* for Easter, and ordered it to be *blessed* on Easter Saturday. This was an important discovery, at least for the Chandlers. Instead of fourteen years patent, this Pope was made a Saint of forever; for having thrown so much *light* on *superstition*.

Boniface 1st, was elected in 418. He ordered that no person should be Priested till he was 30 years of age. This was a rational idea enough; as the burdens of the office were multiplying very fast, under the sanction of the Popes, it was necessary the Priests should come to their *full growth and strength* to bear them.

Celestinus 1st. was elected in 433. He ordered the Psalms to be sung at mass, and added to this *mass*, the Gradual, Tract, Offertory, Post Communion and Preparation. This Pope must have deserved well of the church for these additions, but strange to tell, he was not *deified*!

Leo 1st, was Poped in 440. He added the *orate fratres, prefatio and banc igitur*, to the holy mass; and condemned the *heresy* of Nestorius, who denied that *Mary* was the *mother of God*! What an heretic this same Nestorius must have been, to deny so *clear* and *demonstrable* a proposition as this—But there will be *blind* heretics in all ages of the world, we fear, at this rate.

Gelasius 1st, was elected in 492. He ordered that one part of the *supper* should not be consecrated without the other. He instituted a *public festival* for *blessed candles*, which shews what a good and pious Pope he was, and how *rationally* the Christian faith and doctrine were promoted in his days.

Felix 4th, made Pope, in 562, encouraged the use of extreme unction as a proper means of facilitating the escape of poor sinners into the other world—He was made a Saint of, as he richly deserved, for his new invention.

Boniface 2d who succeeded in 529, commanded and decreed, that during the celebration of the *divine* offices, the people should be separated from the Clergy. Thus we find that little by little, the Clergy were mounting the high horse, and scorning the company of their poor friends and best benefactors, the people.

Sylverius, created Pope in 336, introduced the veil over the chalice or cup, and invented the *patena*, or little baby plate, for the Priests to

eat off.—He deserved to be ranked among the Gods for this wonderful discovery.

Virgilius, made Pope in 540, commanded the *faithful*, henceforward, to honour Mary, with the title of *Mother of God*! This is the progress of Idolatry; for we find that it went hand in hand with superstition, from the infancy of the church to the present day.

Gregory 1st, mounted the pontifical chair in 590. He instituted the Missel and Breviary. He introduced into the Mass, *Kyries, Allelujahs, Pater Noster, Libra nos Domine*, Litanies, Stations, Ashes, Fast four days before Lent, procession of boughs or branches, the washing of the feet on holy Thursday, the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday. He also introduced into the Papal bulls the *humble* title of *Servus Servorum Dei*—The servant of the servants of God! He was the first, who, on sneezing, desired that *Dominus vobiscum*, or the Lord bless you, should be said. He was stiled *great*, and made a saint of. The reader may see how well he deserved these titles, from what he had done—Superstition and Idolatry are deeply indebted to him; and the priests have a right to *pray for him*.

Sabianus, elected in 607, ordered that lamps should be lit and kept burning in the Churches. He preferred oil to wax; his father, probably, had extensive olive groves, and traded largely in oil.

Boniface 4th, dedicated the pantheon to the Virgin Mary, and the twelve Apostles, ejecting the twelve *Dei Majores*, or superior Gods of the Romans, whose lease had expired—the lease of the Virgin and her twelve friends, it is imagined, will soon expire also, the tenants sharing the same fate with their predecessors.—This Pope instituted the festival of *all saints*; for now they had got so numerous, that a day in the year, was not sufficient for every one of them—This was the *grand review* of them all.

[To be continued.]

Free Press Tract Fund.—Although the advocates of liberal principles are opposed to those Bible, Missionary, and Tract Societies, which have been established in this and other countries, the principle on which these Societies proceed cannot but receive their approbation. It in fact, originated with the friends of civil and religious liberty in Europe, and would, long ere this, have overthrown political as well as spiritual tyranny, had not measures been adopted to restrain the dissemination of all writings calculated to dispel the mists of ignorance.

A plan so excellent and efficient was not to be lost sight of by the priesthood. They immediately perceived that a system so well adapted to operate on the human mind in favor of liberal principles, might, now that its progress had been arrested by the civil power, be acted upon with advantage in aid of religion. Pious tracts were thus substituted for those of a liberal tendency; and that mighty engine, the press, the value of which can only be appreciated when it is employed in diffusing knowledge, has been prostituted to the base purpose of arresting the progress of science, in order to extend the empire of superstition, and the influence of the priesthood.

The object contemplated by creating this fund, is to counteract the demoralizing

effect which the circulation of *religious* tracts must have on the community. By sending forth writings of a nature suited to open the eyes of the world to the deception practised upon them—to give birth to reflection—to lead to a rational train of thinking—it is not doubted but that *one liberal* tract, while it will be read far more extensively, will have a more powerful effect in rendering mankind better and happier, than *ten thousand* of those *religious* productions, with which the country is inundated, and which, there is every reason to believe, are loathed by four fifths of the inhabitants.

With these views, the "FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION" respectfully solicit the co-operation of the friends of Truth throughout the United States, who will be supplied with Tracts at *cost* prices.

Subscribers of \$1, will be entitled to 1000 pages; being ten pages for one cent.

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The following Tracts are now for sale at the Depository.

No. 1. Christian Mysteries.—8 pages.

No. 2. Progress and Effects of Christianity.—4 pages.

. All orders must be post paid, and accompanied by a remittance. Nos. 3 and 4 will be put to press in a few days; and the subsequent numbers as soon after as the receipts will meet the expenses.

. The Subscribers and Friends of "The Liberal Press," a truly *free* and *independent* journal, about to be emanated from "The Society of Liberal Friends," in Philadelphia, are informed, that its publication will commence on Saturday, the 21st June instant. The work will be printed semi-monthly, at \$2 per annum, payable quarterly in advance. Each number will contain sixteen closely printed pages, (see an extract of Prospectus in the Correspondent, 31st May.) Subscribers names will continue to be received by Edward Thompson, No. 34 South Second Street, (corner of Trotter's Alley) Philadelphia, to whom, as Editor and Conductor, all communications, (postage free) respecting the work, are requested to be addressed.

Subscriptions are also received at the office of the *Correspondent*, 422 Broadway, New-York.

Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-Street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 22d instant, at half past ten o'clock, forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Society of Free Enquirers.—This society now holds its meetings in the Long Room, No. 163 Chatham-street, where lectures are regularly delivered every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

N. B.—There is an entrance to the room also in James-street.

The CORRESPONDENT is published at 422 Broadway, by Geo. Houston & Co. Terms—\$3 per annum in advance. The first four numbers having been reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 23.

NEW-YORK, JUNE 28, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the National Gazette, Philadelphia.

NO. II.

SIR,—In brief pursuance of my promise, I proceed to offer for the consideration of Mr. Walsh and his Correspondent, who, I have no doubt, are too prudent to touch any of them, a collection of texts exemplifying the MORAL CHARACTER of the God of the Christians, and of his favourites. Mr. Walsh and his friend know too well that they are perfectly safe in their stupid and hypocritical abuse of what they are pleased to call Infidelity; but they will not burn their fingers by meddling with a controversy too hot for their handling. They dare not deny the detestable but conclusive character of the texts I am about to refer to; friends as they are to popular deception, they are foes to serious argument. If this be not the case, here is the challenge. Let them accept it if they dare; or any clerical friend for them. If they dislike the epithets I apply to hypocrisy and deception, let them show if they can, that these epithets are not justified by the citations. I am ready to join issue with them, before the public, and appeal "to the Law and to the Testimony."

I undertake to prove from the Bible, that the God of the Jews, adopted and enthroned as the God of the Christians, is a being, unjust, and cruel beyond all records of human cruelty elsewhere to be found, vindictive, wavering, not knowing his own mind, deceitful, jealous, unforgiving, and eternally punishing the innocent for the crimes of the guilty. A being of passions most detestable and truly diabolical. And that his great and acknowledged agents and favourites have been the most execrable villains known in the records of human history.

To begin from the beginning. When he placed Adam and Eve in Paradise, he either knew they would eat of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, or he did not know it. If he did not, what becomes of his omniscience? If he did, was it not an act of wanton cruelty to tempt them deliberately to their destruction?

On account of the wickedness of the human race, he brought the Deluge on the earth. Was there no milder method of reforming mankind, than that of exterminating them. *Et ubi desertum faciunt*, (says the Goth, speaking of the Romans) *pacem appellant*.

When God ordained the existence of the human race, their minds, their bodies, their faculties, their propensities, their dispositions, were derived from him: he framed and fashioned the human race after his

own liking; and with such characters and tendencies as he chose. Why did he not give them better dispositions? It rested with himself. Why punish them for the necessary results of his own management and ordination? He might have made them angels; why did he choose to make them devils, and then wonder and complain that they were so? Did he take any pains to instruct them better? to reform them? No: he knew the career of wickedness to which he had destined them; he let them run it without any kind of interference on his part, and then exterminated the whole race, for actions due to himself and the disposition, he had implanted!

But suppose for a moment that the men deserved punishment, why kill the poor ignorant women and children? what had they done? Why drown the sheep, the oxen, the beasts, the birds the insects? what had they done? *Quid meruistis oves, placidum pecus, inque legendes nati homines? Quid meruere Boves?* Tell me, Mr. Walsh, where can you find, out of this book, any thing more diabolical than this savage, indiscriminate cruelty that overwhelmed, with cool deliberation, in one vast and universal destruction, the innocent and the guilty? Can this be considered as answering the great end of all punishment, reformation? This is what your worthy correspondent, I suppose, will call Gospel morality: Divine justice: wholesome example! No wonder the priesthood are cruel by profession. What a pity it is you are not a priest! Not even an abbe, or an ex-jesuit! Come out boldly: lay aside your rancorous and skulking paragraphs, and defend this deluge if you dare. Who has yet replied to Voltaire's poem on the earthquake at Lisbon? You may perhaps term all this ungentlemanly abuse. Cease then your sneers at infidelity, your pious denunciations of heterodoxy, your wish for Pain's works to be consigned to the flames. Had you not better *reply* to them first?

Before that sentence is decreed 'em,
Do read 'em, Mr. Boreum, read 'em.

Shew us your patent right for exclusive abuse and scurility, in which you and the orthodox are so delighted to deal: else do not complain of the maxim, *par pari referto*; or that we sometimes condescend to take the advice of that wise man of 300 wives and 700 concubines, and answer a fool according to his folly. If you have any thing like argument, out with it, let us have it, and we will then deal in argument alone.

The precept of Moses, and of the Lord, (who gave the Israelites favour in the sight of the Egyptians) to *borrow* valuable articles from the Egyptians with the intent to rob them; with the design of fraudulently plundering; this breach of honour and honesty, sanctioned by God himself, who interfered to promote and render it successful, may be found, Exod. xii. 35, 36.

The Israelites were commanded by God, through Moses, to invade the lands of nations who never injured them, and against whom they had no quarrel. Of the cities far off, they were ordered to put to death merely the male inhabitants, sparing none but the women and children: but of the nations who were nearest them, and the first in order of in-

vasion, "thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth." Deut. xx. 16. What these nations had done to deserve this is no where told. See, particularly Deut. vii. 2.

The following precept of persecution has nothing that I know of equal to it in thorough going deliberate cruelty, even in the worst animals of the holy inquisition. It is perhaps the most diabolical command ever given or uttered within the records of history. Deut. xii. 6. "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy own son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend who is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, let us go and serve other gods, thou shalt not hearken to him, nor shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare or conceal him; but thou shalt surely kill him, thine hand shall be the first upon him to put him to death." "And if thou shalt hear say, in one of thy cities, that certain men of Belial are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants to observe other Gods, then if it be so, thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein and the cattle thereof: * * * that the Lord may turn from the fierceness of his anger and have mercy on thee." Ib. 15, 17. In what kind of language can the Devil be described comparable to this most vindictive cruelty. Is this a God to be loved? If the rebel angels sought to dethrone such a monster, who can blame them, or avoid regretting their failure?

Whether a child is circumcised or not depends on his parents, or on his master if he is a servant; but every uncircumcised man child is ordered by the Lord to be cut off. Gen. xvii. 14.

As it is said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, saith the Lord." There can be no reason for this predelection, but the fraud and lying of the cunning and cowardly Jacob, and the gentlemanly forgiving disposition of Esau.

Exod. xii. gives an account of the Lord destroying the first-born throughout the whole land of Egypt: what crime had these infants committed?

Read the chapter of murders at the Lord's command. Josh. x.

Read the punishment of Israel generally on account of Achan's concealing a few goods. Josh. vii. A flagrant case of punishment inflicted on the innocent.

The slaughter of the other tribes by Benjamin, for no earthly purpose or reason that appears, all by direction and management of the Lord. Josh. xx.

The treacherous assassination of Eglon at the command of God. Judges iii. 15.

The command of Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, to destroy Amalek, man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. 1 Sam. xv.

The command of treachery delivered from the Lord by Samuel, on account of Saul's sparing Agag. 1 Sam. xvi.

The whole history of the man after God's own heart, the favourite of the priests, the pious David: the most detestable of the characters commemorated in history. A captain of banditti, a rebel, a traitor, a

whoremonger, an adulterer, a lascivious assassin, recommending vindictive treachery and murder with his dying breath!

The vindictive cruelties of the pious prayer in Ps. cix. cxxvii.

Elisha cursed some little children in the name of the Lord, who gratified him by the murder of forty-two of them, who, in their childish sport, called Elijah, bald pate. No doubt a crime deserving death in the opinion of the clergy.

The three years famine, on account of the Lord's anger against Saul and his family, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Starving the people, who were innocent, because Saul had offended him. *Quid delirant reges, plectantur æchivi:*

The same principle of unjust cruelty in destroying 70,000 of the people, because David, at the instigation of the Lord himself, had numbered them. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. To be sure, in 1 Chron. xxi. 1. it is said that it was not the Lord but Satan that incited David to number the people. I would not give a cent to choose between the Lord and Satan in this case. The crime is in destroying 70,000 innocent persons for one guilty man, who underwent no punishment.

In 2 Chron. xviii. 21. The Lord sent a lying spirit into the mouth of his prophets, that they might prophecy falsely. A deception quite in character and not to be wondered at.

So much for cruelty, falsehood, treachery, robbery, and plunder, by fraudulent management, and by open violence, not merely sanctioned, but ordered, prescribed by this God of Israel and of the Orthodox.

Let us now examine the attributes of this deity, the description given of him in the Christian Scriptures; but it may be not too late to close the preceding character of iniquity and abominable cruelty, by referring generally to the angry denunciations throughout the whole of the prophecies. It is utterly impossible the Jews should have been a humane and civilized people, when the God whom they worshipped is always represented as a fickle, a jealous, a cruel, an unjust, and furious revengeful tyrant. That any Christian minister can seriously believe a being, so described and characterized, should be a proper object of veneration, of adoration, of reverence, of imitation, is utterly impossible in the nature of things. Attributes so horrible and unlovely, make human nature itself revolt: the feelings are, not respect, but hatred and fear. What then are we to think of these salaried, these hired and paid priests, who live by what in common language would be called by a word too gross for these pages: but in the sacred slang of the order it goes by another name. Such is the truly satanic being to whom they address their adorations and supplications.

Of the Old Testament Attributes of the Deity.

For I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God; visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of them that hate me. Deut. xx. 25. And for mercy's sake who could love him?

He that sacrificeth to any other God, save unto the lord only, he shall surely be destroyed. Deut. xxii. 20.

And my wrath shall wax hot [this is the Lord who speaks] and I will

kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows and your children fatherless. Ib. 24.

Thou shalt not revile the *Gods* : nor curse the ruler of thy people. Ib. 28.

Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits and thy liquors ; the first born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Ib. 29.

See the whole of the next chapter for a recognition of the existence of other gods, beside the God of Israel. What is meant by giving him the first-born I shall consider by and by.

God is frequently said, both in the Old and New Testament, not only to swear, but to swear in *wrath*. Deut. i. 34. Ps. xcv. 2. Heb. iii. 11. Naham i. 2, &c.

God himself says, " My fury shall come up in my face, for in my jealousy, and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken." Ezek. xxxviii. 18, 19, and the whole of the Lamentations of Jeremiah. Do these accounts give any aid in the repression of bad passions ?

I gave them statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they could not live. Ezek. xx. 25, 21.

And it repented the Lord that he had made man, and it grieved him at his heart. Gen. vi. 6. See also the whole of chap. xiv. of Jeremiah.

God is always spoken of in the Old Testament as if he were a human being. He is said to have rested and to have been refreshed. Ex. xxxi. 17. Wine that cheereth God and man. Judges. ix. 13. He is said to hiss for a fly and a bee. Is. v. 56. Is. xvii. 18. Zach. x. 8.

God spake to Moses face to face as a man talketh with his friend. Ex. xxxiii. 2. Nay, even some of the nobles of Israel saw him. Ex. xxiv. 10, 11. Yet in the same chapter where Moses is said to have talked with him so familiarly, God declares that Moses shall only see his hinder parts, for that no man can see his face and live. Ex. xxxiii. 20, 23.

Satan is represented, in Job, making a contract with God Almighty about persecuting Job.

In Genesis God is represented as being in dread of the efforts of mankind in building the tower of Babel. " Go to, let us go down and confound their language. Gen. xi. 4, 6, 7. The Chaldean phraseology about God is always plural. So let us make man after our likeness. Gen. i. 26. To whom did he address himself ? Is not this gross Anthropomorphism ?

What are we to say to his directions to his prophets, to Isaiah, Ezekiel, &c. making them act like filthy beasts, like madmen and idiots : and causing them to speak in language so dirty, so obscene, so gross beyond all example, as to amount to an absolute prohibition against reading the passages to another, or permitting a female to peruse them at all ?

As to human sacrifices, and the dedication of the first-born to the Lord, I have not opportunity now to enter into that disputation further than that I conclude it from a consideration and comparison of Numb. iii. 11, 12, 14, 41. Levit. xxvii. Deut xxxii. 42. vii. 2. xxii. 29.

So much for the moral precepts and moral practices of the God of the Old Testament. I will not dwell on the moral precepts and prac-

tices of those pious personages his favourites, the patriarchs and prophets; it would lead me too far. Those who read their bible with attention will have a tolerable just idea of them. Let Mr. Walsh and his parson find me, if they can, more reprehensible characters than Abraham, Jacob, Samuel, David, Solomon, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, &c.

My next communication will relate to the morality of the Jews and the New Testament, which will furnish us with abundant materials for Mr. Walsh to reply to. TRUTH.

MR. EDITOR.—The following observations (with the exception of those in the preface, which have been written since) were not drawn up with a view to publication, but at the solicitation of two or three acquaintances, I send them to you to occupy a place in the "Correspondent," should you deem them worthy of insertion. JULIAN.

A few plain Observations on the Mosaic account of the Creation, and the Fall of Man.

The Creation and the Fall of Man are the two first subjects in the Old Testament. On them, especially on the latter, the Jewish and Christian Systems are built—in the belief of which, we are told, are involved our eternal happiness or misery.* This is sufficient to induce me to give the subject a consideration; and taking the admonition of an inspired writer, to "try all things, prove all things, hold fast that which is good," I thought it my duty to examine these subjects with freedom and impartiality. I have done so, and, as I think, found them destitute of truth and consistency. I have noted down my observations in as clear and argumentative language as I possibly could, founded on the texts that are given.

A desire to serve the cause of truth, lessen the effects of religious bigotry, and anxious to contribute my mite to the general stock of information, have been my only motives for giving to the public the following imperfect view of the Creation and the Fall of Man. Had I sufficient health and leisure, I would treat in the same way the Deluge, the Plagues of Egypt, the Theocracy of the Jews, the Birth, Mission, Miracles, Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus; and offer a few remarks on the question, Has Christianity been of utility to man, and is it adapted to promote his happiness?

Gen. i. 3. "God said let there be light, and there was light." The writer would lead us to believe that God was in company with one or more beings; but of what nature and character we are left to conjecture. Whether he was talking to another person, as one partner in business talks to another; or whether he was giving command, as a man commands his workmen, would no doubt create a difference of opinion, as the text will bear both constructions. Certain it is, that if God was talking, it must have been to some person or persons; but who

* If the Fall of Man had not taken place, there would have been no sin, no Redeemer, and, consequently, none of that faith which wafts man to the mansions of eternal bliss, and the want of which plunges him into eternal misery. "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16.

they were, what they were like, and where they resided, unbelievers must never know. If God had merely to say, "let there be light," that is, if he had only to *speak* in order to have a thing *done*, I cannot see why it should take him *six days* to make all things when a *moment* would have been sufficient. Then he would not have been fatigued, nor have had to *refresh himself*. If any one ask me why I object to the account given by Moses, and how the world came to exist, I will say that the former is absurd, and contrary to our ideas, and true philosophy; and of the latter, I and every man are entirely ignorant. How matter came to exist? whether it is created or is eternal? I do not know; and in this respect, every person is as ignorant as myself. I know that matter does exist, as much as I know I exist, notwithstanding some learned men have denied its existence. Whether matter was produced by a superior intelligent being, or whether it exists by its own power, I must refer my readers to the writings of Locke, De Cartes, Malbranche, Mirabeau, Voltaire, Hume, Paley, &c. who have examined the subject in all its various bearings; but who, notwithstanding their abilities and information, know no more about it, as I said before, than I do myself. Still their arguments may give satisfaction to some minds; more satisfaction, I believe, than is to be found in the book of Genesis. Indeed, I do not see how it is possible for an intelligent mind, that has examined the subject, to believe in Moses' account of the Creation.

Ver. 7. "The waters which were *above* the firmament." Baily defines the word firmament thus:—"Firmament, the heaven of the fixed stars; or that space which is expanded arched over us in the heavens." What Moses could mean by saying, 'the waters which were *above* the firmament,' I shall not attempt to show. I know that the small particles of water exhaled by the sun, from seas, rivers, &c. rise to a region above the "heaven of the fixed stars."

Ver. 12. "The earth brought forth grass, and herb, yielding seed after his kind. Ver. 13. And the evening and the morning were the third day.

Are we to infer from these verses, that the herb brought forth seed, and the tree fruit on the same day they were made? I can draw no other inference from the texts. How was it possible for the earth to bring forth grass, herbs, and fruit, before the sun was made? Can any thing vegetate without heat? If they can, then the whole race of philosophers, ancient and modern, with the exception of Moses, have been greatly in error,—and the sun deprived of an important quality. To say that "God can do all things," is absurd in this case, because he might as well have made the sun at the commencement of his labors, as on the *fourth day*, as it constituted a part of the six days work. This would have shown something like system, which every good mechanic never fails to pursue.

Ver. 16. "God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night."

This is on the fourth day. Moses certainly could not possess much knowledge of astronomy, or he would have known, with our common mechanics, that the sun is the source of life, light and heat. It is the light of the sun that makes day, as his absence does night;

yet Moses says, God made three days before the sun was made! He does admit that the greater light was made to rule the day; that is, to control, to preside over, to govern; but he does not say that the light of the sun produces day. As respects the moon, how can she rule the night, when she is in conjunction with the sun, and even the light which she gives, is borrowed from the sun. Perhaps Moses, who, no doubt, like the people of the eastern nations, was well versed in astrology, believed that the sun and moon governed day and night in an astrological sense. The same reason has been assigned for making the sun and moon; but not so with the stars. Moses laconically and simply enough observes, "he made the stars also!" This was enough to give satisfaction—to the Jews.

We are led to infer from the bible, that every thing God did, was in favor of this little planet on which we reside; that he made the solar system, the infinite system of the fixed stars, and sent his own son to be murdered by, and for the salvation of the little human beings, which he placed upon this earth; and though it is only 7,970 miles in diameter, (according to the Rev. J. Goldsmith,) while Herschell is 85,000, Saturn 77,950, Jupiter 94,100, and the Sun 870,000 miles in diameter; yet all these large bodies, and the infinite variety of worlds, were made for this little globe, the inhabitants of which have always (with a little exception, previous to the fall,) been miserable, sinful and rebellious!

A question here arises; are Saturn, Jupiter, the Sun and the lesser planets, *inhabited*? It is the opinion of the most profound Astronomers that they are; but Moses, Jesus, (the Son of God and who *knew all things*,) and the rest of the Jewish prophets, have not told us, nor did they know any thing about it. If they are inhabited, have not the inhabitants been subject to the same temptations as Adam and Eve were? If they have, and resisted these temptations, they must be more virtuous and better organized than we are; and this consequently subjects God to partiality? If those inhabitants are subject to sin and misery, and if the son of God was sent from heaven to redeem the inhabitants of this earth, will not *each* of these bodies require a redeemer, a son of God? If this is the case, God must have many sons, or that son must be murdered as *many times*, as there are worlds that are inhabited? If our priests can get over this knotty subject, they will have to use "a multitude of words to darken counsel;" in other words, they will have to use a great deal of sophistry.

Ver. 17. "God set them (the Sun and Moon) in the firmament." This is something in the same way that an astronomer sets his figures of the sun, and stars in an orrery. Where they were made, and where they lay previous to their being "set" in the firmament, Moses does not inform us.

Ver. 26. "God made man in his own image." If we take this literally, it is that God has arms, hands, legs, mouth, nose, lips, &c.; that he is composed of flesh, blood, bones, &c.; that he has the senses of seeing, hearing, &c., and that he has the faculties of imagination, memory, judgment, understanding, &c. But the Christian world, though it likens God somewhat to the physical form of a man, believes that man was made *morally* "in the image of God;" that is, that as God is perfect,

man was made perfect also. If man was made perfect, like God, how could he become imperfect, unless we are to suppose that God can become imperfect also, which is contrary to all the ideas we have of the nature of God? Again,—if Adam was made perfect, how could he be weak, and subject to sin and misery? If he was not perfect, how could he be made “in the image of God?” These questions cannot, I believe, be easily solved. In what sense Adam was made in the image of God, I cannot form an idea. But have not Christians represented God, as composed, not of the same, but of infinitely *worse* materials than those of which they themselves are composed?

Ver. 31. “And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was *very good*.” If God made every thing “*very good*,” how came evil to exist? Can that be good which contains within itself the seeds of evil and dissolution? Have not wars, civil and political, existed from time immemorial? Have not religious wars existed with desolating fury, in one country or another, ever since the establishment of the Jewish and Christian systems? What is the contest at present between the Turks and the Greeks? Have not the latter been supported by the people of this country, and those of Europe, principally in the name of Christianity? Do not the Turks and Greeks stigmatize each other as “*infidels*?” How came murders, tortures, robberies, &c. to exist, with the innumerable pangs of misery, some of them so violent, as scarcely to be endured, and others that secretly prey upon the mind, and fail not shortly to produce a premature death? How came these, and all the various disorders, both of man and beast, into existence if all was made *very good*; and that too by a being who is said to possess omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, and wisdom, and whose tender mercies are over all his works.” Surely the writer of Genesis never could believe, that man would ever arrive at even a moderate degree of intellectual knowledge or he never would have put forth such a wretched production as the book of Genesis, though it is on a par with the rest of the books contained in the bible.

Chap. 2, Ver. 2. “And on the *seventh* day God ended his work.” I notice this, because I have never seen it noticed in any sermon, lecture, &c. and I believe that nine tenths of the Christian world are not aware of the fact, that the writer of Genesis says, that God ended his work, not on the sixth, but on the *seventh* day. From the supposed circumstance of God completing his labors in six days, the Jews were commanded to rest and to worship their God on the seventh day. Christians, always hating the Jews because they crucified Jesus, and rejected his doctrines, adopted Sunday, the *first* day of the week, as their day of rest and worship, without law, precedent or reason, except the mere circumstance of Jesus’ rising from the dead on the first day of the week. If it is deemed necessary to observe Sunday, in commemoration of the supposed resurrection of Jesus on that day, ought not Christians in all parts of the world to commence their worship at one and the same time Jesus is said to have risen from the dead. But here a difficulty arises; for if Jesus rose at six o’clock on the Sunday morning, it would, at, and near the antipodes to Jerusalem, be twelve hours later, or six o’clock in the evening; consequently the Christians of the latter place would

be pursuing their avocations, twelve hours *after* the Christians of Jerusalem had ended theirs for their sabbath, or day of rest and devotion.

Ver. 2. "And he *rested* on the seventh day from all the work which he had made." What an inconsistent and weak idea this writer must have had of that Being who made all things, of which this earth appears but an atom, although it is about twenty-five thousand miles in circumference. He makes God all powerful, and yet so weak, so fatigued, that he is under the necessity to rest and refresh himself. See Ex. 31, 17. That man must have an abundance of superstition who believes that the God of the Jews is the Supreme Being of the universe. Such is not my belief, and this will account for the strictures and the levity with which I have treated those passages, which represent the Jewish God as the Author of all things.

To be Concluded in our next.

JULIAN.

Philadelphia, June 1828.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 1828.

BLASPHEMY.

We copy the following from a Report of the Commissioners, appointed by the Legislature of Pennsylvania, on the Penal Code :—

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in general assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That if any person shall wilfully premeditatedly, and despitefully blaspheme or speak loosely or profanely of Almighty God, Christ Jesus, the Holy Spirit, or the Scriptures of truth, such person, on conviction thereof, shall be sentenced to pay a fine not exceeding one hundred dollars, or undergo an imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months.

We were impressed with the idea that the law, once existing in Pennsylvania, respecting what is called blasphemy, had been long since repealed by the Legislature of that state. But it seems we were mistaken, and that so far from the advancement of liberal principles keeping pace with the progress of Science, in a community which boasts so much of its literary institutions, bigotry and intolerance appear to exercise a paramount sway. This, at least, is the opinion we are led to form on supposing that the measure recommended in the above report, will receive the approbation of the Pennsylvania Legislature. But as we are persuaded that the intolerant law has originated with those men who vainly attempted the establishment, by legislative sanction, of the Sunday School Union, we anticipate its sharing a similar fate.

We should like to hear the definition which these mistaken men give of the word blasphemy, as applicable to God, to Jesus, to the Holy Spirit, or to the Bible? According to our conceptions, to blaspheme any one, signifies to do some injury to their character—to bring them into discredit among their equals. Now, how is it possible to injure the character of deity, who has no equals? Or how can any thing we may say of him be blasphemous, when there is no evidence of any relation, or connection existing between this deity and man, by which the acts of the latter could be considered either agreeable or disagreeable to the former. It is easy to understand how one man may injure the character or person

of another man. But no such contact or intercourse exists between deity and man, as between man and man. It is therefore, a mere bugbear of the priesthood to talk of blaspheming *God*. It is *themselves* they mean. Exposing their deceptions affects their *interest*, and makes them tremble for their salaries and luxuriant fare. Hence the cry of infidel, blasphemer, atheist; which, notwithstanding its frequent repetition is now heard with little apprehension; and when applied to antichristian principles, will always be found indicative of mental improvement, and productive of real benefit to the human race.

As to what is called blasphemy against the "holy scriptures," it is a prostitution of the term to use it in that sense; for if ever there was a book in existence that deserved the name of blasphemous, that book is the bible. It is a libel upon its supposed author. It is a libel on human nature. It is a libel on true morality. It is a libel on every thing held decent among men. How then can a book be injured which is itself so fraught with injury to all who confide in its contents?

But supposing the bible to be as pure as we assert it to be impure—supposing that it furnished no examples of bloody wars—of horrid massacres—of robberies—of adulteries—of crimes committed by order of the priesthood, in the name of deity; these *negative* qualities would be far from placing it beyond criticism, or authorize the denunciation of blasphemy against those who should candidly investigate its contents.

"But," say our opponents, "you are not only blasphemers of the *Old Testament* books, but you actually have the audacity to deny the authenticity of the *New Testament*; and, horrible to relate, you more than insinuate your doubts as to the existence of Jesus of Nazareth, the true Messiah who appeared upon this earth about 1800 years ago."

If it be really *true* that such a personage as Jesus of Nazareth once existed, and that the account given of him in the gospels is a faithful narrative, it would certainly be *presumptuous* in any one to deny this. But why such a denial should be called *blasphemy*, appears extremely absurd; because the mere fact of *refusing to acknowledge* the truth of a statement, a narrative, or a history, can have no effect on that statement—cannot in any way detract from, or injure it, if it is based on incontrovertible principles, or supported by indisputable testimony. To withhold credit in such circumstances, might indicate ignorance or indifference, but it could not implicate the incredulous in a charge of impiety, far less of blasphemy. Now, the latest enquiries on the subject have led to the opinion, that the words *Jesus Christ* do not express a *person*, but a *principle*. That the *person*, in fact, has *not* existed.

"This conclusion," observes a late writer, "is drawn, not only from the general defects of the christian system of religion, when contrasted with its pretensions, as found among all sects; but on the absence of all historical proof. No writer, in the century in which the person is said to have lived, is known to have mentioned such a character. No record, of any date, has come from the country in which the person is said to have lived, mentioning such a person. The admitted forgeries of the second and third centuries, relating to such a person, are evidences that there was no authenticated history of him at any period, and that all mention of such a person was fraudulent in its origin. The des-

elation of Judea, in the first century and before the name of Jesus is known to have existed, warrants the *forgery* of the mention of such a character having existed in Judea. When the name of the person was first introduced, there was no agreement about it: there has never been any general agreement about it; and the evidence lessens wherever enquiry extends. The defenders of the personal existence of Jesus refer to the books of the New Testament, as having been written in the first century. Lardner and others have given dates to them in the first century; but all those dates have no other authority than supposition. "*Supposing* such a person to have existed, such cotemporaries must have written *about* such a time." This is the whole of their authority. But the facts of the case weigh against them; for their is no mention of the existence of any such books until *late* in the *second* century. Had any writer mentioned the existence of the books in the *first* century, they would have formed a different kind of evidence; though they might not have proved all that is said about the person of Jesus. Not having been known in the *first* century, and only having been known in the latter part of the *second* century, as part of a multitude of *contradictory* writings about the person of Jesus, it follows, that ~~these~~ books, rather than a proof of the existence of such a person, are collateral proofs against it."

• With what justice, then, can any one be accused of blasphemy, and profanity; or even the *correctness* of their principles be disputed, when they refuse to adopt, or call in question a religion founded on such defective evidence?

The Exploder.—Our readers will recollect that our correspondent, I. S. S. of Buffalo, in his communication which appeared in No. 14, of the present volume, announced his intention of publishing a series of articles on the Bible, Missionary, Tract, Pious Youth, and other similar societies, instituted for the purpose of extorting money from the public. The first of these articles has just reached us; and as we consider its circulation calculated to promote the cause of truth, and its perusal to gratify our readers, we have commenced its republication in our present number.

TO THINKING MEN.

"He who will not reason, is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; and he who dares not is a slave."

"The delicacy which shrinks from detecting hypocrisy, in whatever garb, whether of charity or religion, is treason to mankind."

A correspondent of the Rochester Observer, of the 29th of February, under the signature of "Visitor," in speaking of a meeting held in Buffalo, relative to the observance of the Sabbath, says—"When the people came together to consult, Satan came also among them," as in the days of Job. He reported that he had been "*walking up and down on the earth on Sunday*, and seen much evil, and advised all men to work, as *virtue* could only be sustained by industry."

I always associate the idea of *disingenuousness* with *meanness* and *vulgarity*, and he who resorts to such a course will ever prove a bad

advocate. I was present at the meeting alluded to, and well know the person to whom "Visitor" has, in so courteous a manner, applied the epithet "Satan." Had "Visitor" related the whole truth, and fairly stated the remarks of "Satan," I would have thanked him cordially, and remained silent. "Satan" confined his remarks to the question, "Is the order and virtue of society promoted by *compelling* men to be idle one day in seven?"—He assumed the negative to be true, and premised his remarks by adopting as axioms, that "Idleness is the mother of vice," "Virtue and Happiness" synonymous terms, and so of "vice and misery;" that it is a decree of nature universally applicable, "By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," and that whoever violates that universal decree, shall be unhappy in the precise ratio of its violation.

It is a maxim that the "labours of the body relieve the pains of the mind." Happiness and unhappiness are terms which relate only to the mind; it is quite immaterial whether we attain the happiness by the labors of the mind, or those of the body. The indutrious man is almost ever a virtuous and contented one. The laboring man and the literary one are equally happy; the effect on both is produced by the same means, EMPLOYMENT. For the truth of these positions, he appealed to the experience of every one. He then came to the application of those remarks to the project of preventing boats on the canals, and carriages on the roads, from running on Sundays; whereby people of uncultivated mind would be *compelled* to be idle, and consequently vicious. "Satan" did not, at that meeting take the broad ground which I now do, that all the drunkenness, gambling, theft, debauchery, and every crime which disgraces our nature, is attributed to idleness, principally on what is called the Lord's day; that the observance of that day is fraught with more ills to mankind than all the other causes of evil combined. These conclusions were formed from the observations "Satan" made while "up and down on the earth on Sunday." He stated explicitly to the meeting, that the dram shops, taverns, and places of idle resort were more particularly filled on that day than on any other of the week. The young apprentices, journeymen mechanics, and common laborers, assemble; and, to use the language of "Paley," having no employment, they consume their time in rude, if not criminal pastime, in stupid sloth, or brutish intemperance."

The exertions which "Visitor" and others are making to enforce the idle observance of the Sabbath, naturally has led us to enquire into the propriety as well as the duty of such observance. They, "Visitor" and others, take it for granted, that it is by the express command of God. I ask, why the Mahomedans are to observe Friday, the Jews, Saturday, and the Christians Sunday; and why most of the nations have no command at all on the subject? I undertake to answer, that in Nature there is nothing to enjoin such an observance, nor from which to infer an obligation to do it. A portion of mankind believe that Jesus of Nazareth was sent of God to promote their welfare, both spiritual and temporal. Jesus must have known all that was important for man to do, or else he was not God. If the Sabbath was necessary, why did not he or his disciples enjoin its observance? He did not,—but, on the contrary, he was notoriously a *Sabbath breaker*. No such observance was attended

to until the fourth century, and subsequent to the council of Nice, that grandest combination of fraud and *priscraft* ever known amongst men. The following quotations from "Dr. Paley" may have some weight as authority. "The celebration of divine service never occupied the whole day. What remains, therefore, of Sunday, must be considered as a mere rest from the ordinary occupations of civil life. If the command by which the Sabbath was instituted, be binding upon christians, it must be binding as to the day, the duties, and the penalty; in none of which it is received. The observance of the Sabbath, was not one of the articles enjoined by the apostles. The practice of holding religious assemblies on the first day of the week, may have originated from some precept of Christ or his apostles, though *none such* be now extant." "A cessation upon that day from labor, beyond the time of attendance upon public worship, is *not intimated* in any passage of the New Testament; nor did Christ or his apostles deliver, that we know of, any command to their disciples, for a discontinuance, upon that day, of the common affairs of their professions. The *resting on* that day from our employments, longer than we are detained from them by attendance upon these assemblies, is, to christians, an ordinance of human institution."

The Christian religion suffers no man to "judge another in respect to the Sabbath day, or of any holy days."—*Colos. ii 16*.

It asserts the right "to esteem all days alike."—*Romans xvi 5*.

It allows every man "to be persuaded in his own mind in respect to the Sabbath days."

It forbids us to judge one another in such "indifferent matters as ceremonials, meats and days."—*Romans xiv*.

It does not bind men to "weak and beggarly elements, the observance of *days and months, and times and years*."—*Gal. iv 10*.

In the old and new Testaments, recreations and amusements are no more forbidden on the first day, than any other of the week.—And, I again quote from Dr. Paley where he says of the Sabbath, "if it had been observed to the departure of the Jews out of Egypt, a period of about 2,500 years, it appears unaccountable that no mention of it, no occasion of *even the obscurest allusion* to it, should occur, either in the general history of the world, before the call of Abraham, or, which is more to be wondered at, in that of the lives of the three first Jewish Patriarchs."

I have come to the conclusion, that the *observance of the Sabbath day is a cunningly devised institution, got up by the Priests to compel people to be idle, or else go to church for amusement, and thus contribute to their support*.

To compel men to be idle, is to promote vice. Idleness is incompatible with virtue, therefore, before we deprive a person of one means of employment, it is our duty to provide him another; else we must be responsible for his vices. These remarks apply to one day as well as to another; but as Sunday is the only day in question, then I ask what will you do with the idlers on that day? The answer generally is, "send them to meeting." That answer is given without reflection. The Gospel has absolutely become merchandise, and is sold at such extravagant pri-

ces that the poor cannot afford to purchase it. In consequence of the fashion of the times, a seat in a Church in any of the cities, cost as much as a comfortable dwelling. The poor are compelled to make great sacrifices to gratify pride, and keep up appearances, or else to forego the advantages, if any there be, of going to meeting. It is said there are free pews for such as are not able to hire or purchase. It is true, and the man who should occupy one, would receive such contemptuous looks from his pious brethren, that he would as soon have the word *pauper* labelled on his back, as to do it. The *meeting houses* have become a sort of fashionable exchange, instead of places of devotion. Those who are not in the fashion, dislike to appear with those who are and as the poor cannot afford to be fashionable, they are literally sneered out of the reach of the Gospel.—Once make all the seats free, have the rich and poor seated on equal terms, and in a short time you would find the fashionables, who are now making such pretention to piety, seeking other places of amusement: and when they do so, they will carry with them the main support of the *Priests*. What would you have the travellers and boatmen do on Sundays? If one of them should visit even your "Visitor's" *meeting house* in his every day garb, perhaps the best he has, every man among you would find his pride to get the better of his piety; keep his pew door shut and *fastened*, and the boatman would learn, to his extreme mortification, that he had fallen among the proud Pharisees, instead of the humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus.

[To be continued.]

Another Liberal Paper.—We have received the prospectus of a new paper, about to appear in the capital of Ohio, to be entitled "*The Cincinnati Free Press*;" and to be edited by R. L. JENNINGS. It is to be published weekly at \$2 per annum, payable in advance. The well known attachment of Mr. Jennings to liberal principles, and the fearless manner in which he has hitherto advocated them, renders it unnecessary for us to say any thing more in the way of recommending his present undertaking, than merely to announce his intentions; and to state that we are authorised to receive subscriptions for the "*Free Press*," from all who are disposed to patronize a publication to be strenuously devoted to the emancipation of the human mind.

Mr. Jennings will in future act as our agent in Cincinnati, in receiving subscriptions for the *Correspondent*.

Fourth of July.—The members of the *Free Press Association*, and the friends of liberal principles generally, intend to celebrate the approaching Anniversary of National Independence, by a public dinner, in the New-York Coffee House, No. 10, William, corner of Exchange street.

Tickets, which will admit a lady and gentleman, \$1.25; or a single gentleman, 75 cents each; to be had at the Office of the *Correspondent*, 422 Broadway; or at the Bar of the New-York Coffee House.

Free Press Tract Fund.—Although the advocates of liberal principles are opposed to those Bible, Missionary, and Tract Societies, which have been established in this and other countries, the principle on which these Societies proceed cannot but receive their approbation. It, in fact, originated with the friends of civil and religious

liberty in Europe, and would, long ere this, have overthrown political as well as spiritual tyranny, had not measures been adopted to restrain the dissemination of all writings calculated to dispel the mists of ignorance.

A plan so excellent and efficient was not to be lost sight of by the priesthood. They immediately perceived that a system so well adapted to operate on the human mind in favor of liberal principles, might, now that its progress had been arrested by the civil power, be acted upon with advantage in aid of religion. Pious tracts were thus substituted for those of a liberal tendency; and that mighty engine, the press, the value of which can only be appreciated when it is employed in diffusing knowledge, has been prostituted to the base purpose of arresting the progress of science, in order to extend the empire of superstition, and the influence of the priesthood.

The object contemplated by creating this fund, is to counteract the demoralizing effect which the circulation of religious tracts must have on the community. By sending forth writings of a nature suited to open the eyes of the world to the deception practised upon them—to give birth to reflection—to lead to a rational train of thinking—it is not doubted but that *one liberal* tract, while it will be read far more extensively, will have a more powerful effect in rendering mankind better and happier, than *ten thousand* of those religious productions, with which the country is inundated, and which, there is every reason to believe, are loathed by four fifths of the inhabitants.

With these views, the "FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION" respectfully solicit the co-operation of the friends of Truth throughout the United States, who will be supplied with Tracts at *cost* prices.

Subscribers of \$1, will be entitled to 1000 pages; being ten pages for one cent.

A donation of \$10 will entitle the donator to 500 pages annually, during life. A donation of \$5, to 250 pages annually, during life.

Orders to be addressed to the agent, Mr. GEORGE HOUSTON, *Free Press Tract Depository*, 422, Broadway, New-York.

The following Tracts are now for sale at the Depository.

No. 1. Christian Mysteries.—8 pages.

No. 2. Progress and Effects of Christianity.—4 pages.

* * All orders must be post paid, and accompanied by a remittance. Nos. 3 and 4 will be put to press in a few days; and the subsequent numbers as soon after as the receipts will meet the expenses.

Free Press Association.—The regular monthly meeting of the "Free Press Association," will be held in the Lecture room in the "Temple of Science," (formerly the Bethel Academy,) Elizabeth-street, between Houston and Bleeker streets, on Sunday, (to-morrow) July 6th, at 11 o'clock forenoon. In the afternoon, a Theological Lecture will be delivered at 4 o'clock.

Society of Free Enquirers.—This society now holds its meetings in the Long Room, No. 163 Chatham-street, where lectures are regularly delivered every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

N. B.—There is an entrance to the room also in James-street.

The CORRESPONDENT is published at 422 Broadway, by G. & Co. Houston & Co. Terms—\$3 per annum in advance. The first four numbers having been reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 25.

NEW-YORK, JULY 12, 1828.

Vol. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BLASPHEMY.

MR. EDITOR—Although I have been a resident in Pennsylvania for upwards of twenty years, it was not until I perused the 23d No. of the *Correspondent*, that I had any idea of a law existing in this state for the punishment of what is denominated *blasphemy*. It is true, I have heard it said that a sailor was fined, some twenty-five years ago, in Philadelphia, for swearing “by the frosty face of Jesus Christ;” and that the law under which he was tried, was an old English Statute, passed in the reign of William and Mary, when this state was a colony. How any of our judges could have recognized such a statute appears to me inconceivable; for in the constitution of this state, (Art. 9, Sect. 3.) it is expressly said “that no human authority can, in any case whatever, controul or interfere with the rights of conscience;” and by section 7th, it is declared, that “the free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man; and every citizen may freely speak and write on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.”

I conceive, therefore, if our constitution means any thing, that it virtually repealed the colonial law; that the sentence of the poor sailor was an arbitrary stretch of power; and that the attempt now making to revive the law, indicates an intention to subvert the liberties of the country, and to restore the oppressive sway of a foreign despotism.

But the law is not only repealed by the constitution—it is abominable in the eye of common sense. It is a law by which every religion, or sect of religion, may, while in power, persecute all the rest, if they presumed to exercise the right of freely communicating their thoughts and opinions. By this law might be seen, in one court, a christian prosecuting a deist; and in another, a deist prosecuting a christian—the one for questioning the legitimacy of Jesus Christ; and the other for saying that Jehovah had an equal, and that his justice cannot be satisfied but by injustice.

The ignorance, the timidity, and the superstition of man, have created a thousand spiritual phantoms which have no positive or real existence in nature; these frightful productions of the human imagination are, however, very highly estimated by their original progenitors. The more distorted the object of adoration is, the more it seems to excite the

pious affection of its devoted victim. Fanaticism and folly are always the concomitants of false religions ; and when once the human mind is subjugated and placed completely under the dominion of superstition, reason loses all the energy of its character, and the moral world becomes a chaos of ignorance, vice, and misery. It is amidst this general darkness that hot-headed, religious enthusiasm sets about the business of protecting the phantoms of its own creation. This must be done either by civil or ecclesiastical law, annexing a terrifying penalty to each violation. But who is this law to protect ? The answer to this would be different in different countries ; and even among the sectaries, professing substantially the same religion. Among the Christians, the Trinitarians would contend for a law which should cover over the sublime and mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, and guard the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost against human outrage and profane obloquy.—Among the Arrians and Socinians, the law would go only to protect Jehovah himself, leaving the Son and Holy Ghost to shift for themselves and defend their character in the best manner they could. Thus Christians themselves would be unable to agree upon the persons or beings whose character the law of Blasphemy ought to protect.

In countries not professing the Christian religion, another and distinct class of spiritual idols are set up as objects of adoration ; and, of course, all these *Blasphemous laws*, as they ought to be called, go to the point of guarding their character, such as it is, against the slanderous insults of those who come under their jurisdiction. The character of Mahomed is as sacred in Turkey as that of Jesus is among the Christians. Zoroaster commands the adoration of the Persian world, and his character is profoundly sacred. Penetrate into the Indies, and you will find the sacred name of Fot commanding the adoration of millions, and it would be blasphemy there to speak against his divinity. The same remark in spirit and principle, will apply to all the sublime and dignified phantoms of all the other nations of the earth.

The advocates for the laws of Blasphemy say, that there is one supreme God, and that his character ought to be protected, whatever may be said concerning the inferior divinities. But it may be asked, who gave to legislators on earth the right and the power of making laws concerning the character of the Creator ? Is he not fully competent to protect his own character, without recourse to the malignant and persecuting arm of human flesh ? Yes, and there is no man, or set of men, on earth, that has a right to make laws respecting the religious opinions of individuals—let those opinions be what they will. The law should take cognizance only of *immoral actions*, leaving to each individual the absolute right of modifying his theological ideas according to the best judgment which human reason can form on the subject. Whoever is not sufficiently civil to the divinity he adores, must look to that matter himself, and settle the dispute in the best manner he can. Let legislators look to the morals, the science, and the virtues of society—with theology they have nothing to do ; it is beyond the sphere of their jurisdiction.

ARISTIDES.

MR. EDITOR,—The annexed is a second letter in continuation of the correspondence began last year, as published in the second volume of your work, page 386. I hope you will publish it. JUVAMOR.

Hudson, 22d June, 1828.

SIR :—In my last letter I urged you to attentively read your Bible with particular reference to the Calvinistic Creed ; but would now solicit of you the like attention to it in reference to the character and attributes of the Deity. The more pious deists, struck with the immensity, grandeur, brilliancy, and order of his visible works in the material universe, adore in silence *the great unknown*.

“ An awful reverence checks their songs,
“ And praise sits silent on their tongues.”

But Moses and others, called inspired writers, in claiming an intimate communication with him, and presuming to delineate to human comprehension his excellences and his will, have degraded the very idea of him. Instead of a spirit omnipotent, omniscient, just and wise in perfection, the Deity of the Old and New Testament appears, though the fabricator of all nature, and of its laws, a *corporeal* being, with human passions and imperfections ; contending unsuccessfully with Satan, his independent antagonist. Instead of a display of his perfect love, knowledge, and unerring skill in his general plans and creations, the works of his hands run counter to his intentions, and are, in the opinion of his worshipers, in sure progress to eventuate in the endless exhibition of penal torture and horror, and of his interminable vengeance !

A formidable rebellion of Angels against his authority, has raged in heaven, his high and holy habitation ; since which Satan's influence with him has been such that, in sociable conversation with him, he moved him to destroy righteous Job without a cause. When his co-equal son was on earth, Satan entertained him in the wilderness forty days without food, and then tauntingly perched him on the pinnacle of the temple. An underling agent of Satan, called the prophet Samuel out of the blest abodes against his will. The deity wrestled with Jacob who, he confessed, had power with him, and had prevailed. He, after holding a council of heavenly spirits, sent one of them with lies to destroy Ahab to his destruction. He descended from heaven to the tower of Babel, to ascertain whether the information that had come to him concerning it was true. He tempted Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, to ascertain the steadfastness of his faith. Most of his miracles in Egypt by Moses, were imitated by the magicians ; but in making lice, their skill was exceeded. He hardened Pharaoh's heart, to shew his great power in his destruction, and to get a great name through all the earth. He declared it to be his will to visit the iniquities of fathers upon their posterity. His sons took them wives of the daughters of men, and begat giants of old time, men of renown. And the sacred texts enforce the blind and exploded doctrines of necromancy, astrology, exorcisms, and the stationary fixture of the earth, in contradiction to the demonstrations of the physical sciences.

If it be urged that, notwithstanding these, and a thousand other absurdities, the unbelievers in the doctrines now called orthodox, are in the minority, and ought to judge of them with deference to the opinions of the majority; I answer, that evidence is the criterion of truth, and in this case reason is denied to be a competent witness, and as inspiration and revelation are the only allowed decisive evidences of their truth and consistency, of which, in opposition to reason, I, and all such as me, are destitute; we are not authorized or licenced to adopt that creed, or even to hold a truce with it. But I deny being in a minority of unprejudiced enquirers. It is true that the orthodox leaders, always combined, and organized, having so generally the old prejudices, and also the loud and intollerant acclamations of bigoted ignorance on their side, have hitherto, by proscription, intimidated into silence most of the unbelievers, and then vauntingly claimed all the mutes for their approvers. But they, to fill up their intelligent majority, have need also to claim a host of less wary and scrutinizing unbelievers, who acquiesce in their system from a prepossession of its utility to society, and in the education of families. All this, however, is insufficient—those leaders, in our free states, feel their ground giving way; nor could it have so far sustained them under their former practice of calm preaching, and an unfrequent use of the old printed catechism. What of late mainly sustains their progress, is their united, and too successful efforts in squeezing, chiefly out of the poor and labouring classes of the community, by the most artful and pitiful means, immense funds by which they support colleges for educating bigoted youths gratuitously for their ministry, as well as missionaries, foreign and domestic, and itinerant excitors of fanatical awakenings, and contribute largely to Bible, Sunday School, and Tract Societies; whence pamphlets, and small books of legendary tales, are profusely and freely distributed in families, taverns, and steam-boats, for pre-occupying and inflaming the minds of children and simpletons, before the arrival of the *arch enemy, ripe-reason*. To which is added every other attention to decoy the minds of the weak, uninformed, and sensitive; whereby a durable taint is fixed in the breast, repelling with horror every after examination or counteraction.

Vain and futile, indeed, is the pretence of the salutary tendency of such a system on the peace and order of societies and families. The earliest direction of the infant's body and mind, ought to tend to its adaptation to the scenes and concerns of the world wherein he is born, and to which his labours and researches are limited. But the false system in question, inculcates a disrelish of all its enjoyments and concerns; fires the imagination with terrors and extacies of a fictitious state, exclusive of the solid realities of this; and will sit like an *incubus* on the progress of investigation and sentiment through life; cherishing in the pious and fervent breast, the ever prompt sense of the vast distinction between the regenerated and the corrupt in heart, and between the heirs of heaven and the heirs of hell, feelings destructive of that mutual charity, respect, and affection, which are the endearing cement of societies and families.

But these errors will be done away by the sure progress of the human mind; and periodical meetings for useful instruction, innocent amusement, and the polish of manners, will succeed them.

J.

REVELATION.

MR. EDITOR,—I have for some time past thought of sending you my ideas of what a revelation would be, if given by such a being as the theologians call God, possessing such attributes as they ascribe to him. What they hold out to be the word of God, and the evidences of revealed religion, I consider to be inconsistent with those attributes which they ascribe to him, when they tell us that he is eternal, infinite, and perfectly just, wise and good ; that he is omnipotent and omnipresent.

I conceive that no person of sound mind, exercising his reason and judgment, can believe that such a Divine Being, if he saw it to be absolutely necessary to give to his rational creatures a revelation of his being and attributes, of his mind and will concerning them, would give it in such a way, that nine-tenths of the human race should not be able to know or understand it, without the aid of priests, councils, synods, or acts of parliaments ; as it must be evident, that, if a revelation be absolutely necessary, it must be so to every individual whose rational faculties are sound and good : for a revelation to one, or a few only, cannot be a revelation to the whole ; and that it is absolutely necessary to be clear and unequivocal, as it is to be given ; because without it is clear and unequivocal, it is impossible to demonstrate the existence of an "Eternal Intelligent Being," exterior to, or above Nature.

Doubtless, the human species are accountable beings ; but, they are accountable to none but their fellow beings ; or to the society to which they individually belong. If the human species were created by an eternal, infinite, and perfectly good Being, then, as his creatures, they must be dependant upon him only for their existence, as he must have created them merely of his own good will and pleasure, whose goodness must be equal to his power, without limits : and, as justice and wisdom are but modifications of goodness, so, in the counsel of his own will, according with his infinite power, his omniscience and goodness, he could not design, plan, nor exercise any means but what would effectually produce present and perpetual good, or happiness to all his rational creatures capable of receiving it.

If justice has any meaning is it not just, that I, as a reasonable being although finite, should unite, and exert that knowledge, power, and goodness, with which I am endowed, with a design to benefit society at large, but more particularly that part within the sphere of my connection, consistent with my own happiness ?

It must then be evident that if there does exist such a divine Being as the theologians describe, who has made mankind accountable to him for their conduct, he must be, in justice, bound to make such a revelation of himself, and of his will to them as respects a general rule of conduct. Such revelation must, of necessity, have been so perfect and complete, clear and unequivocal, that it would be impossible to be misunderstood by any one who had the proper use of his rational faculties ; independent of the aid of any learned sophist or capricious designing priests, of synods or counsels, of kings or parliaments ! There cannot exist a doubt that such a Being must have been able to make such a revelation to his

creatures with the greatest ease; and what he could have done with the greatest ease, that he would have done with the greatest pleasure.—Such a revelation being the same to every individual capable of receiving it, would need no voluminous record to imprint it on the heart or mind. Such a revelation being simple, complete, and unequivocal, would be to them for a king, a priest, and dictator, in all their concerns of importance, and exclude the necessity of expensive rulers and teachers.

I am persuaded, that generally speaking, the learned, or men of letters among the teachers of religion, are hypocritical, and have some sinister end. My reasons for such a persuasion are as follows:—First, because it appears to me, that learned men, who exercise their rational powers, must know that no religion can be supported without sophistry, fable, and falshood. Secondly, because men of letters, who study surrounding existences, must know, that intelligence is an acquired property; that, there exists no innate ideas; that all ideas are received through the medium of the organic structure of the senses, from external objects, and thus all intelligence is acquired; that intelligence cannot exist unconnected with a material organization; that, therefore an intelligent being must be a material being; that, all intelligent beings must be local and changeable beings, subject to decomposition, or analization; that, consequently, no one intelligent being can be eternal, infinite, or independent; that, they are only so many parts of the whole, which is the only eternal, infinite, self-existent; independent of its forms or parts, which are evanescent, contingent, relative, and dependent on each other, and the whole. Thirdly, they are hypocritical teachers, because while they profess to approve of liberty of conscience, free enquiry, and the right of private judgment, and to disapprove of persecution for difference of sentiments, they can suffer their fellow creatures, to be persecuted, without protesting against it; and not only so, but many of them connive and rejoice at it!

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 12, 1828.

FOURTH OF JULY.

The Fifty-second Anniversary of National Independence was celebrated by the *Free Press Association*, in the New York Coffee House. The company, consisting of about 80 gentlemen, sat down to an excellent dinner, provided by Mr. Stackhouse, at 3 o'clock, P. M.—Mr. Houston in the Chair. After the cloth was removed, the Chairman gave the following toast:

1. The People—The source of all political power—that source should be enlightened.

Mr. Offen then rose, and addressed the company as follows:

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—The history of the Christian world is black with the crimes of kingly tyrants; and its pages stained with blood, flowing from the innocent, but unfortunate victims of priestly cruelty and intolerance. The subjugation of America was only wanting to root out the very name of liberty from the earth, and to establish an

uninterrupted reign of despotism.---The government of England, always the first to profess, but the last to grant liberty to nations, except for the object of plunder, having reduced to the level of cattle, the inhabitants of that ill fated country, conquered and robbed the East Indies---murdering some, and starving others of its inhabitants. Stealing, also, the ignorant but peaceable sons of Africa, and dooming them to perpetual chains. In this they displayed that detestable hypocrisy, which alone belongs to the Christian character---professing a religion which regards all men as equal, and preaching the pretended liberty of the Gospel to men in slavery.

Thus bloated with kingly and aristocratic pride, and flattered by priestly cant and cunning, the English government, to complete its conquest of the rights of man, began to reduce the free born sons of America to arbitrary taxation and bondage---never dreaming but that this country would be an easy, as it was their last, conquest---the only object in the way of almost universal empire. But the cold icy hearts of despots and cowards are soon dismayed, when opposed to the uncontaminated blood which flows through the veins of men determined to be free. Yes, Gentlemen, it was the revolution of America that demonstrated the incontrovertible truth, that "the people are the source of all power." But that source must be "enlightened," or the power will be corrupted by ignorance and superstition.

The pride and insolence of kings are, comparatively, harmless, when compared with the cunning and craft of the priesthood, by which they prevent legitimate power from flowing pure from the fountain of the people. These holy usurpers impose on man intolerant and contradictory creeds to poison his mind; and threaten him with never ending woe if he should, even by mistake, make a wrong choice. They represent *Reason* as a rebel against God and the church; and caution man, in the name of every thing dear to humanity, to "believe and fear," lest an angry deity should, in the interval of doubt and investigation, cut him off for ever.

Monarchs know how to value these sanctified impostors; and, like twin brothers, they always unite to keep in ignorance and terror the people, from whom they derive all their mock importance, and on whose labour they live and fatten. The republic of America has been delivered from civil tyrants by its excellent constitution. But is there no other order of tyranny? Where is the American that can say "I am as free as God and nature admits?" Who asserts this freedom? Who puts it to the test? for no man can be truly free who is not at full liberty to examine, and approve or reject, any, or every system of religion, on conviction of its truth or falsehood. I say no man can be free in consequence of such conviction, if his person, property, or character receive injury, directly or indirectly, from any part of the community of which he is a member.

Apply this to the dangerous influence of the priests of this country. If you, as honest, peaceable, and conscientious citizens, question the truth of what is called revealed religion, (a right which justly belongs to every human being,) will the Christian priest hold you guiltless? Hypocrite as he is, he will not pretend to conceal his malignity. He has a thousand ways to injure you with impunity. He knows the theory, and

puts in practice what his divine master said was his business on earth—to set the husband against the wife, and the wife against the husband. He can, and often does poison the happiness of whole families. His sanctified appearance, supported by awful warnings, can so operate on the most faithful wife, as to embitter domestic life, and render her who has ever been entitled to unbounded confidence and regard, an implacable enemy.

Who is it that priestly influence does not alarm? Is the presidential chair free from its influence? No! Are the judges afraid of the priests? Yes! Are Juries free to act contrary to the dogmas of the priesthood? No! the priests have them already in bondage, by dealing forth the torments of a future world. Is the storekeeper free? No! he will loose his bread, and be called infidel into the bargain. It will, perhaps, be said that the merchant is alone exempt from the fear of the church. But he, too, has his friends and acquaintances, who will desert him at the nod of the clergy: And who would keep company with the sons, or marry the daughters of those whom the pious good natured christians call infidels, and blasphemers? If I am asked whether there is no exemption to the reign of priestly tyranny? I answer, Yes! It is the *Free Press Association of New York*; and I will add, that until, like them, the citizens of this republic laugh at all priestly dominion, and oppose it according to the constitution of this free country, the people will not be the pure source of political power.

Mr. Offen having concluded his address, the following toasts were given from the chair:

2. The light of Freedom—It is from the light of Truth.
3. Nature's code—The standard of the Universe.
Ode—"Men whose sires for freedom bled."—Mr. Bruce.
4. Reason—The centre of the system—we will continue to revolve around it.
5. Truth—We will pursue it, even to the end.
Song—"The Star Spangled Banner."—Mr. Bartine.
6. Science—She knows no country—no party—no kindred.
Ode—"Hail to the time when the mist is receding!"
7. The Press—Free to press down all oppression.
8. Ecclesiastical power—To the shades let it pass.
9. States without churches—churches without state—but no church in this state.
Song—"St. Patrick was a gentleman,"—Mr. Bruce.
10. Perfect freedom—instead of toleration in religion.
11. May the law be founded on liberty, and liberty be guarded by law.
12. May the sword of justice be swayed by the hand of mercy.
Song—"Sweet are the flowers,"—Mr. Bartine.

The chairman now rose, and remarked as follows:

I have always been of opinion, since I could reflect on the subject, that no power in any country is paramount to that of a jury when once sworn—They are not only the judges of the fact, but interpreters

of the law. And this appears obvious from one consideration alone, namely ; that no man can be punished for an offence against the laws, until he is convicted of that offence by a competent jury. No judge--no not all the judges in the country with the president of the United States at their head, can sanction the infliction of punishment for a crime which has not undergone the investigation of a jury.

It appears to me, therefore, to be an assumed power in any judge to attempt to dictate to, or control the opinion of a jury. The moment they undertake, by oath or affirmation, to give "a verdict according to the evidence laid before them" all attempts to bias their minds are improper. Even the summing up of a judge appears to me to be reprehensible. Juries are bound to try the cause, not according to the gloss or colouring which the bench may think fit to give to the evidence, but according to their *own understanding* of that evidence. Judges are appointed to preside in, to regulate the forms of court, to preserve order, and to pass sentence when a verdict of guilty is returned. They are also the proper persons to apply to for advice when a jury are under any difficulty as to the *law* of the case ; but further than this appears to me an illegal practice, because if judges are permitted, whenever they think proper, to give opinions pending a trial, this can be viewed in no other light than influencing the case by something more than the evidence presented to the jury.

The same objections occur against the practice of counsel addressing juries after the evidence is closed. The latter are presumed to be men of intelligence, and therefore capable themselves of judging of the evidence. If they are not capable, they ought not to be placed in a situation where their deficiency of intellect is supplied by the representations of those who are *interested* in distorting both the law and the facts. In that case, the verdict is obtained, *not* "according to the evidence," but according to the dexterity, or, perhaps, superior chicanery of the advocate for the successful party. Entertaining these views, I have to propose the following sentiment,

13. The full rights of juries, in substance as well as form.

14. "The rights of Man,"—May all nations have wisdom to understand, and spirit to assert them.

After the preceding toasts were drank, the chairman begged to be permitted to make a few observations.

In looking over (said he) the papers of this morning I observed that in almost every instance, their Editors, in remarking on the return of this day, attribute all the advantages which we enjoy from the revolution, to *divine providence*, without, in any way, recognizing the splendid achievements and noble sacrifices of those patriots, to whom the country is mainly indebted for the blessings we now enjoy.

When we consider the state of mental degradation into which society has been plunged by the priesthood, and which has been so ably illustrated by Mr. Offen, we can be at no loss to account for the mass of the people entertaining the absurd notions which they profess, as to an overruling providence. But when we find the conductors of the press, who, from their situations, might be expected to possess enlightened minds,

indulging in the fashionable cant, we are compelled to believe either that they are destitute of those qualifications essential to public instructors, or that they are the veriest hypocrites alive.

Is it possible for any reflecting and honest mind, to look back to the period when the struggle with Great Britain commenced, and which terminated in the establishment of our independence, without recollecting and acknowledging, how much we are indebted for that glorious result to the writings of the immortal Paine? Can any one whose mind is not spell bound by a fatal superstition, forget, that had not the genius of this great man given birth to his inimitable work entitled "*Common Sense*," we should at this moment have been groaning under the tyranny of England's king, notwithstanding the immense power, and the kind intentions of this so-much-talked-of thing called *providence*?

When this vast continent was languishing under a foreign despotism; when its inhabitants were destitute of the talent or energy to stimulate opposition to the common enemy, was it the finger of God or of Paine, that was conspicuous in guiding the "tempest torn vessel," and steering her through the rocks and breakers, into a safe and commodious harbour? Accustomed as we are to hear the name of Washington, and of other heroes of the revolution lauded to the skies, while that of Thomas Paine is not only neglected, but pronounced with scorn and contempt, and attempts made to consign his writings to oblivion by a base unprincipled faction, I am confident the day is not far distant when justice shall be done the man, who, in every line that he wrote, and in every act of his life proved himself to be the advocate of Truth, and the unwearied benefactor of the human race.

For what is it that the name of Paine has been traduced, and still continues to be so by bigots and fanatics? Why is it that a man, who so boldly attacked vice in its very citadel, and so clearly pointed out to mankind the means of recovering their rights and privileges—why is it, I ask, that such a man should ever have been calumniated?—It is because that, in displaying Truth in the vivid light so peculiar to his magic pen, he unveiled the frauds and impositions of powerful villany; and, by exhibiting them in their native deformity, taught the human race how to appreciate liberty. It is because he "tore the mantle from the sable hypocrite who preyed with wanton ferocity on the vitals of society."

Notwithstanding all the attempts of the priesthood and of their ignorant dupes, to decry the writings of Thomas Paine, the demand for them is every day increasing—a clear proof that had the principles he promulgated been of that pernicious tendency alleged by his enemies, they and their author would long ere this have sunk into merited oblivion. But it has been found impossible to blot his name from history; where, in spite of the efforts of tyrants, it will command the respect of posterity, and his works be sought after, when his traducers shall have perished and become forgotten. I shall, therefore, give you, as our next toast,

15. "*Common Sense*," it tells us that the "*Crisis*" is at hand, when the "*Age of Reason*" shall establish the "*Rights of Man*" on a permanent foundation.

16. The memory of all men, in every age, who have written and bled in the cause of Liberty.

Song—" *The scene was more beautiful,*" &c.—Mr. Bartine.

17. The friends of Liberty throughout the globe.

Song—" *The patriot's glory,*"—Mr. White.

18. Honor's best employment—the protection of innocence.

19. The Ladies we Love—May we always love the Ladies.

Song—" *Green grow the rushes, O,*"—Mr. Bruce.

20. The friends who have left us since the last 4th of July.

Song—" *Harry Bauff,*"—Mr. Young.

21. Our cause—May no private bias, or selfish motive prevent any honest man from serving it.

22. The Paterson, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Boston, and other societies already formed, and now forming throughout the Union, for the diffusion of Liberal Principles.

Song—" *On this day,*" &c.—Mr. Bartine.

23. Success to the Greeks in their efforts to emancipate themselves from ecclesiastical as well as civil tyranny.

24. The champions of the Free Press of England.

Ode—" *Ah we shall see that glorious day.*"

VOLUNTEERS.

By Dr. Karsten. The memory of Benjamin Franklin, who by his genius taught mankind fearlessly to conduct lightning from the clouds, and to oppose the oppressions of tyrannical rulers, by arguments founded on Reason:

By the same. The Free Press Association, of the City of New York, May its influence be as extended as its principles are calculated to promote a sound intellectual cultivation.

By Mr. Stackhouse. The Memory of Thomas Paine, who has done more to ameliorate the condition of the human race than any man that ever existed.

By the same. The day we celebrate---may we continue to enjoy our liberties as long as this day exists.

By Mr. Savage. The memories of Theobald Wolf Tone, and Robert Emmet---Irish traitors of '98 and 1803; their noble, though unsuccessful efforts in the cause of freedom, entitle them to rank with the greatest heroes and patriots of the American revolution.

By Mr. C. C. Manwaring. The "Age of Reason," and the "Rights of Man." May they soon supersede the Age of delusion and fanaticism, and the proscription and oppression of man by priests and despots.

By Mr. Douglas. May every man be as free as the stars in the skies.

By Mr. White. The priests of this country, like the locusts of Egypt---the time will come when the country will cease to produce sustenance for them.

By the same. The fathers of the Revolution---May their sons never forget them.

By Mr. Dixon. Richard Carlile, the clergy's moth, the people's friend.

By Mr. Offen. The Editor of the Correspondent, whom British gold could not corrupt, nor American Priests intimidate.

By Mr. J. Beames. May the enemies of truth and justice be always a day's march behind us.

By Mr. Dixon. Mr. Offen, the fearless, steady, and persevering champion of liberal principles.

By Mr. W. F. Kells. For the benefit of mankind; may the only props of Priestcraft decrease in arithmetical progression, and the common difference be \$400,000.

By Mr. Edge. The Sun, the emblem of Light and Truth---May its rays forever dispel the dark shades of Error, Ignorance and Superstition, and illuminate the Temple of Reason and Science.

By Mr. Savage. Mr Robert Taylor, preacher of the Truth, as delivered to all men: May his name be the last on the long list of victims to christian tyranny and persecution.

The Study of Nature---Instructress of Truth.

By Mr. T. C. Bartine. Liberty of Conscience; May it be supported with manly dignity, by all true sons of freedom.

By Mr. Tucker. May the enemies of freedom fall like the leaves in Autumn.

By Mr. J. Bruce. The memory of Robert Burns, whose works the priests condemn, but which wise men esteem.

By Mr. C. C. Wright. Truth, the sure guide to happiness, and Reason the best antidote for superstition.

The Chairman now proposed "the health of Mr. Stackhouse, for the sumptuous fare he had provided," which was drank with great applause. The company retired about 8 o'clock, much delighted with the entertainment, which all enjoyed as "a feast of Reason," unalloyed by any exuberant "flow of soul."

Liberal Tracts.---We never had any doubt as to the favourable reception of the Tracts now publishing under the patronage of the "Free Press Association;" but we scarcely expected the demand for them would have been so great as it has proved to be. A large edition of the first and second numbers having been already sold, and the subsequent numbers loudly called for, we are making arrangements to have the whole stereotyped, in order to meet the numerous demands from all parts of the Union.

We are glad to find that the hint we gave as to the formation of "Auxiliary Tract Societies," has not been overlooked. A letter from Utica, dated the 4th inst. and inclosing \$5---states---"We shall shortly organize ourselves into a Society, to be denominated *The Utica Independent Pioneer Tract Society*. How the orthodox will be pleased with our assuming the word "*Pioneer*" we know not; but we confidently trust that we may give them cause to repent it." Other letters, containing similar remittances, have been received; and, judging from the trepidation observable in the ranks of fanaticism, nothing ever annoyed the enemies of mental improvement so much as the appearance

of these little harbingers of Reason and Truth. Endowed with perseverance, we require only the support of the friends of liberal principles, to prostrate the hydra Superstition.

THE EXPLODER.

Concluded from page 382.

The "*American Education Society*," must be ranked among the religious traffickers of the day. To exhibit the mighty advantages to be derived from educating the poor and pious, *alias* impudent and lazy young men, I make the following extract from a note to a sermon published in 1826, by the Reverend Mr. Sabine, a Presbyterian priest, at Boston. "That out of 527 young men which this society has patronized in ten years, only 34 are preaching the Gospel and ten only of these are settled or ordained. What a small number in comparison to the number patronized, and the vast expenditure, which has been made during these ten years! Including buildings, founding professorships, &c. the expense cannot be short of *half a million*." Thus it appears that the young hirelings when educated at such prodigious expense, are an article not wanted. Such being the fact, it is useless to persevere in the manufacturing of them.

The "*Western Education Society*," shall not have cause to complain of being overlooked. The managers of this society have some claims to a niche in the temple of fame. They have prowled over the western district, and have greedily gathered apples, butter, and bacon, flax and feathers, rye, rags, straw, and whiskey; in short, there was nothing so small as to be refused by their rapacity, and nothing too great for their capacious maws. They have gone on with their corncrips, which they swapped for whiskey, and their pious potato patches, until, by forcing their clownish piety scholars and priestly professors into Hamilton College, they have disgusted the best feelings of our finest young men, and nearly ruined that institution. There are now at the College, only about forty-five students of all descriptions, instead of 200 or 300 as there ought to be. Its professors and servants receive above \$4000 per ann. I rejoice at the prospect of seeing the College regenerated, by turning out the bigots and monks, and having their places supplied by men of science, free from sectarian theology.

The "*American Bible Society*," with its pompous and deceptive reports, its votes of thanks, its long list of great names, and dead auxiliary Societies, now comes for a share of my compliments. It blazons its pretensions to the world as the means through which, and by which alone, ten thousand millions of human beings, created by infinite love and wisdom, are to be saved from the *vengeance* of that infinite love. We are not accustomed to view this society in its proper light of a grand, monopolizing printing establishment, that begs money, and descends to means of procuring it, which an honorable man would despise, to manufacture books, which they SELL, but do not *give* away; the speculation being profitable to the agents and all those who have the fingering of the cash.* Instead of printing cheap editions of the bible for gratui-

* Since the above was written, the Society has published its report of the past year. From that document I learn, that during the year, they issued 134,629 copies

tous distribution, it prints some editions of the most beautiful kind as to paper, type, and binding, and from the extent of the establishment; and having the salaries of its agents and its rents paid by contributions, they are enabled to manufacture rather lower than any other printers, so that printers and booksellers go there to purchase. The money thus received is represented in their reports as an evidence of the increasing desires of the community to procure bibles; whereas the truth is, it is an evidence of the gradual extension of their printing monopoly. Its concerns are not much understood. Its reports are a convenient and cheap means of getting ones self puffed to the skies, and praised for piety which was never felt. Their report published in 1826, states compensation to traveling agents, (alias licensed beggars) \$1763 89 cents; rent for one year \$1600; sundry petty expenses, \$4469 94 cents, among which I estimate the Secretary's salary at \$2000 per annum; assistant secretary \$800 per annum; agent \$600 per annum. Mechanics and laborers, who earn your bread by honest labor, look at these items, and ponder and wonder!!! In that year there were 222 of its auxiliary societies, which did not contribute in any shape a dollar. So it appears, that with all their fulsome flattery, and fawning praise, men become tired and disgusted with their importunate begging.

The "*American Tract Society*" is a younger branch of the same family. The remarks respecting the one are mostly applicable to the other. Many of the publications are notoriously fictions, and probably so stupid and false, that few intelligent persons ever read them. It is supported, like its prototype, by pompous reports and puffing notices of patrons, some of whose names are conspicuously published in its reports for the liberal donations of 8 cents, 18 cents, 20 cents, and several at 25 cents each. I recognized among its principal patrons, men, accused of smuggling, gambling, and debauchery. They relate sundry marvellous conversions, one of which, published in their *Christian Almanac* in 1826, relating the effect of a Tract upon a young lady near Philadelphia, is as false as the religion of Mahomed. No such transaction ever took place. Others of their wonderful stories, if closely investigated, would prove to be *pious frauds*, intended to impose upon the credulity of the ignorant and vulgar. Among their disbursements last year, I find they paid for services of Secretary, Agent, &c. 1438 dollars and 92 cents; sundry petty expences, 1216 dollars and 27 cents.—These two sums, by their own account, page 16, would, at three for a cent, have paid for more than 814,557 tracts. The details of their contemptible shifts for obtaining money, by babies' caps and pin cushion societies at boarding schools, will be hereafter attended to.

The "*American Sunday School Union*," with its imposing and modest garb of heartfelt charity, though last not least, undoubtedly had its origin in a truly philanthropic motive of bestowing useful education upon the poor. But it has been seized upon with delight by the *priests*, and is fostered by them as a blessing heaven sent to prop their supersti-

of Bibles and Testaments, of which number 127,357 copies were disposed of by direct SALE, while only 7,260 copies were given either to the rich or poor!! Such is the gratuitous distribution of the Scriptures, of which this ostentatious book establishment and its friends so continually boast!!

tions, and to propagate a blind belief in the ridiculous trumperies of ages gone. Instead of cultivating the youthful understanding by books suited to its capacity, we find them clogging it with obsolete catechisms, which never were, and never will be understood; dull, uninteresting tracts, founded on fiction, and a senseless jargon of psalms. The schools are not composed of the poor children. In this place, (Buffalo,) many of the parents of the Sunday scholars are among our most respectable citizens, and are able to clothe and educate them in the best manner, without resorting to the paltry farce of gratuitous instruction. Each sect tries to emulate the others, and to teach its children its own peculiar dogmas, which seldom fail to generate a pious hate towards all who differ from them in opinion. Stand off, for I am holier than thou."

I ask each of my readers to say, can there be a more preposterous idea, than that of preventing the immutable throne of God Almighty from tottering, and of supporting it by means of rag-bags and babies' cap societies, pin cushions, mites, and cents?

I also ask, "How long will you give your money for that which is not bread? and ye simple ones love your simplicity, and ye fools hate knowledge?" Take counsel, whenever you are addressed for money by a man with a black coat, in the name of religion, recollect there are such things as "wolves in sheeps' clothing," and keep your money to educate your own families.

EXPLODER.

"*Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, &c.*"---Extract of a letter from Dublin:---The Association met as usual on Saturday, and the scene was a little enlivened by the receipt of 358l. 8s. 3d. rent; and the hearts of the hearers gladdened by the announcement of the formation of a *Juvenile Association* of contributors, at the head of which was placed Master Thomas Joseph O'Connell Fitzsimon, first grandson of Daniel—a youth, we understand, of infinite promise, and now nearly *three weeks* old. The Sabbath was occupied by these people, who meet for religious purposes, in debate, fierce and fiery.

King David. Hickeringill, an English clergyman, says that "David was a man after God's own heart, not in holiness---that is not meant; for besides adultery and murder, his many other sins, as cursing his enemies to the lowest pit of hell, is unaccountable. But "after God's own heart" is a Hebraism, and in English signifies as much as [a man for my turn]---he will kill and slay as the *priest* commands and directs."

Free Press Tract Fund.—Although the advocates of liberal principles are opposed to those Bible, Missionary, and Tract Societies, which have been established in this and other countries, the principle on which these Societies proceed cannot but receive their approbation. It, in fact, originated with the friends of civil and religious

liberty in Europe, and would, long ere this, have overthrown political as well as spiritual tyranny, had not measures been adopted to restrain the dissemination of all writings calculated to dispel the mists of ignorance.

A plan so excellent and efficient was not to be lost sight of by the priesthood. They immediately perceived that a system so well adapted to operate on the human mind in favor of liberal principles, might, now that its progress had been arrested by the civil power, be acted upon with advantage in aid of religion. Pious tracts were thus substituted for those of a liberal tendency; and that mighty engine, the press, the value of which can only be appreciated when it is employed in diffusing knowledge, has been prostituted to the base purpose of arresting the progress of science, in order to extend the empire of superstition, and the influence of the priesthood.

The object contemplated by creating this fund, is to counteract the demoralizing effect which the circulation of *religious* tracts must have on the community. By sending forth writings of a nature suited to open the eyes of the world to the deception practised upon them—to give birth to reflection—to lead to a rational train of thinking—it is not doubted but that *one liberal* tract, while it will be read far more extensively, will have a more powerful effect in rendering mankind better and happier, than *ten thousand* of those *religious* productions, with which the country is inundated, and which, there is every reason to believe, are loathed by four fifths of the inhabitants.

With these views, the "FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION" respectfully solicit the co-operation of the friends of Truth throughout the United States, who will be supplied with Tracts at cost prices.

Subscribers of \$1, will be entitled to 1000 pages; being ten pages for one cent.

A donation of \$10 will entitle the donator to 500 pages annually, during life. A donation of \$5, to 250 pages annually, during life.

Orders to be addressed to the agent, Mr. GEORGE HOUSTON, *Free Press Tract Depository*, 422, Broadway, New-York.

The following Tracts are now for sale at the Depository.

No. 1. *Christian Mysteries*.—8 pages.

No. 2. *Progress and Effects of Christianity*.—4 pages.

* * All orders must be post paid, and accompanied by a remittance. Nos. 3 and 4 will be put to press in a few days; and the subsequent numbers as soon after as the receipts will meet the expenses.

Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-Street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Theological* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 13th instant, at 4 o'clock, in the afternoon. The *Scientific* lectures are postponed during the continuance of the warm weather.

Society of Free Enquirers.—This society now holds its meetings in the Long Room No. 163 Chatham-street, where lectures are regularly delivered every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

N. B.—There is an entrance to the room also in James-street.

The CORRESPONDENT is published at 422 Broadway, by GEO. HOUSTON & Co. Terms—\$3 per annum in advance. The first four numbers having been reprinted, complete sets can be had at the original subscription price.

THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

No. 26.

NEW-YORK, JULY 19, 1828.

VOL. 3.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the National Gazette, Philadelphia.

NO. III.

The morality of the New Testament has been greatly vaunted, without much reason, as we shall see. Whether any such person as Jesus Christ ever lived, is a very dubious question. We have two authentic writers of Jewish history of their own times, *Philo Judæus*, and *Josephus*. The first of these was, undoubtedly, contemporary with Jesus Christ, if, indeed, Jesus Christ ever lived at all. About this, there can be no dispute. But Philo Judæus never mentions any such person, or any of the miraculous facts contained in the four gospels: although, in the year of our Christian Æra 42, reckoning from the birth of Christ, Philo, then about 60, was sent to Rome as the apologist of the Jews. Jesus Christ is now supposed to have suffered death in the 33d year of his age: but Irenæus, one of the most antient of the fathers, says he died at 50. If so, Josephus, as well as Philo, must have been his cotemporary, living in Jerusalem at the same time. But, except in a short passage, now universally acknowledged to be a christian forgery, no mention is made of Jesus Christ by Josephus. He is not mentioned or noticed by any contemporary writer. The reveries, now forgotten, of the Rev. J. Jones, having hardly lived, are long since dead. All the wonderful accounts told of Jesus in the gospels, were utterly unknown in every other part of the known world; nor is one of the four evangelists mentioned or cited by name, as the authors of the gospels ascribed to them, till about 190 years after the Christian Æra, by Irenæus; nor is any clear account given of the 58 spurious gospels and forged writings extant in the early ages of the church; nor why these four should be selected from among the mass, and adopted as authentic, and 54 rejected. That the Christians existed as a sect in the time of the younger Pliny and of Tacitus, there can be no doubt; although the passage mentioning them in Pliny's letters, is found in one copy only, and is not acknowledged as genuine by the German theologians. It is probable that some obscure imposture, like Eliz. Canning, or the Cock-Lane Ghost of London, might have started up, and been suppressed by the police of Jerusalem; but no person of the name of Jesus Christ was ever known there, worthy the dignity of history.

The utter silence of Philo and Josephus is decisive against the whole

story. They were Jews ; men of learning ; historians ; they lived in the place, at the time ; they wrote the accounts of, and they were alive to the passing transactions of their own day ; the facts could not have taken place without their knowledge ; a person so remarkable must have been known to, or heard of by them ; had he lived and died, as the gospel writers relate, whether Philo and Josepus had believed or disbelieved, they must have mentioned him. But neither they, or any other known writer of credit, near to the times, take any notice of his existence.

I say known writer of credit ; for who was Matthew ? No one knows. In what language did he write, when, and where ? No one can tell. Is the gospel attributed to him, the gospel of the Ebionites and Cerinthians ? This point is disputed. If he wrote, as is said, in Hebrew, who translated him, when, where ? No one knows, or pretends to know. Are the two first chapters of Matthew's gospel spurious or genuine ? Epiphaneus, Jerome, and others of the fathers, say spurious : so say the learned among the Unitarian Christians ; but who can say any thing about it on conclusive evidence ? All is darkness, doubt and uncertainty. I refer to *Jones*, *Lardner*, Christian writers ; who will furnish the reader with all the Christian references and authorities, for all my assertions. They are, and well they may be, regarded as good and faithful Christians ; and able, learned, and unexceptionable compilers. I have access to the original works referred to ; I challenge the clergy (those at least, who are competent in point of learning,) to the controversy. I am not willing to waste my time, by contending with the ignorant as well as the bigoted.

The questions I ask about Matthew, I ask also respecting Mark, Luke and John. What contemporary author mentions or acknowledges them as the writers of the gospels attributed to them ? Not one. The first author who names Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, in this respect, is Irenæus, in his book against Heresies, L. 3. ch. 1. Many spurious accounts (that is accounts now acknowledged so to be) had been published concerning Jesus, (Christ is not a proper name, but a Greek title, signifying, anointed ;) but before Irenæus, these evangelists do not appear to have been named as the authors. Irenæus, by common consent of all ecclesiastical authorities, died 202, after Christ. Lardner thinks that his five books against heresies were not published so early as 178. Tillemont and Massuet think the more probable date of this publication was 192, after Christ ; about the latter end of the time of Elutherus. See the London edition of Dr. Lardner's works, in 12 volumes, 1788, V. 2. p. 154 to 159. There is, therefore, no evidence whatever, that these evangelists wrote any of the gospels ascribed to them, earlier than about 200 years after the Christian Era : for the citations in authors previous to that time, may have been taken, as many of them are known to be, from other similar accounts, not now received as genuine, though standing upon as good ground as those that are now, for some unknown reason, received as of superior authority. The reasons assigned by Irenæus himself why there should be four gospels, and no more, are curious. It is cited by Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, L. 5, ch. 8 : and in Grabe's Specilegium, p. 221.

“Nor can there be more, or fewer gospels than these. For as there are four regions of the world in which we live, and four catholic spirits, and the gospel is the pillar and the foundation of the church, and the spirit of life, in like manner was it fit that it should have four pillars, breathing on all sides, incorruption, and refreshing mankind.”

Upon such strange and imperfect evidence, for the first time, near 200 years after the transactions, by a blockhead and ideot like Irenæus, does the very existence of Jesus Christ rest. A person utterly unknown to Philo and Josephus, two honest and learned men, who are the only authors of the Jewish transactions of that time, in Jerusalem, who lived there, and must have known Jesus Christ, and his doings, if he had ever existed as he is now said to have done; and who make not the slightest mention of his life, his death, or his deeds! Nor could Jesus himself write, or he would have committed to writing some of his precepts for the use of his disciples. Some obscure enthusiast, in some low and despicable quarter of the city, may have lived and preached to a few miserable disciples; but even this is hardly possible, else he would have been noticed among the offenders put to death, as a false Messiah. As to his disciples, they were acknowledged to have been the vilest of rascals, *omni requiritia reuiores*.

Charles 1st, of England, succeeded to the throne in 1628, two hundred years ago. Suppose that now, for the first time, a despicable ideot, like Irenæus, should say that certain accounts of a man endued with miraculous power, who lived in London in 1628, and worked miracles there, were published by Matthew Bay, Mark Randall, Luke Faust and John Johnstou, (persons not heard of before, or mentioned by any writer of the time,) of something miraculous that happened under Charles 1st; what credit ought to be ascribed, at such a distance of time, to such a narration? Yet, is this the kind of evidence on which Christianity is founded; and this is the story that so many base and unprincipled swindlers live by asserting teaching and propagating!

This is the story that so many men solemnly declare before God, they are preternaturally moved by the *Holy Ghost*, to preach and propagate! Men whose conduct is notoriously regulated by their salaries of from 1, to 4000 dollars a year in this country; drawn from the pockets of the credulous, the timid, the time serving, and the ignorant who willingly support these impostures in aristocratic idleness. This is the morality that the popularity hunting pinner of bigoted paragraphs, Mr. Walsh, and his clerical correspondent, would recommend to their readers. If these intolerant revilers do not know that the account I have given is a true and fair one, more shame for them; they ought to know it, and I challenge them to the controversy—I dare them to the discussion. If they shrink from it, they have no reason to object that the revilings of the godly against infidelity, should be retorted on them: if they do accept this challenge, they shall be treated in the language proper to be used towards gentlemen; they shall be furnished with faithful and accurate quotations of authorities, from the actual books used and cited, and with, what I sincerely deem, fair and honest argument, adapted, not for oratory, but truth; for I have no other interest to serve, and I have no other motive or object.

OF THE MORALITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The *Morality* of the Gospel is very objectionable, as appears in the actions and doctrines of Jesus and his Apostles.

Instances of harsh language toward parents and relations : exhortations to leave them, and cut off all connexion with them, for the sake of opinions which any man who behaves kindly and mildly in his domestic relations, may maintain not the less firmly on that account. Matt. xix, 29; Mark iii, 32; Mark x, 29; Luke viii, 19; Luke xiv, 26; John ii, 3. I entreat of the reader to peruse these texts, and ask himself whether he would approve this conduct in his own children. In the same unfeeling spirit is Matt. viii, 21, 22; Luke ix, 61.

Instances of gross and vulgar abuse of the Pharisees and others, the prevailing and literary sect of the Jews; calculated to excite the hatred and violence of the common people against them, in cases where reason and argument were called for, and where Jesus was clearly in the wrong. Matt. xvi, 1, 4; Matt. xxiii, the whole chapter; Mark xii, 38, 40; Luke xi, 37 to the end; John viii, 44. Whoever will carefully peruse these passages will find it difficult to discover how the revilings of Jesus Christ applied to the persons or cases.

Instances of violent assault, and breach of the peace, Matt. xxi, 12; Luke xix, 45.

Instances of his attempts to form a party among the populace. Matt. xxi, 9, &c.; Mark xi, 10, &c.; Luke xix 38, &c. What but riot and sedition can it be called, to enter publicly into Jerusalem, while his disciples were exciting the multitude, who followed him to hail him as KING?

Instances of his abuse of riches, and of rich men; exciting the animosity of the poor against the rich, merely for being rich, and treating riches as criminal. Matt. v, 4; Matt. xix, 23, 24; Mark xii, 44, Mark x, 21; Luke xvi throughout, Luke xviii, 22. Yet when his own luxurious enjoyment was in question, he made no scruple to prefer himself to the poor, Matt. xxvi, 10.

Instance of prevarication, or rather of direct and positive falsehood, John vii, 8. Go ye up unto this feast; I go not up yet, unto this feast. * * * But when his brethren, whom he wished to mislead, were gone, then went he also up unto the feast. The word *yet* is an orthodox interpolation, (a forgery) to get rid of the difficulty, and to soften down a falsehood into a prevarication. Mills, Leusden, and many others have it *was*, not yet, cramming the other and the true reading in the notes: but the reading that rests upon the best evidence of antient manuscripts, is *er*, "I shall not go;" without any limitation: so is the vulgate of Jerome; and so is Griesbach, the latest and best of editors.

Instances of his making free with other peoples property; Matt. x. 9, &c.; Luke x, 4,—ix, 1,—vii, 26,—xix, 30; these are not reconcilable with our common notions of honesty.

Instances of very doubtful and unintelligible morality; as the parable of the unjust steward, in Luke xvi. The parable of the talents, Matt. xxv. 14. The wedding garment, Matt. xxii. "If thine hand offend thee, cut it off," &c. Mark ix, 43. "Let the dead bury their dead, fol-

low thou me," Matt. viii, 22; Luke ix, 60, &c. The recommendation of idleness and negligence, Matt. vi, 31; Luke xii, 16, &c. He himself seems to have depended on his influence with the women for his maintainance, Luke viii, 1—4,—vii, 37,—x, 40. "Go and sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor, Mark x, 21. His reason for speaking in parables, and the strange remark accompanying it, Matt. xiii, 12—14. The parable of the laborers in the vineyard, Mat xx, 1, &c. The woman caught in adultery, John viii, 1, &c.

Unintelligible doctrines, inculcated as matters of faith, necessary to be believed, John vi, 52, et seq. Non resistance of injuries, and loving your enemies: the perpetual denunciation of riches, frugality and forethought; and the hatred inculcated against rich people, as in the parable of Dives, Matt. vi, 34, Luke vi, 20—30; xii, 16.

The preaching of superstitious and ignorant opinions: as the doctrine of demoniacal possessions: the cure of epilepsies, by the fasting and prayer of the prescriber: the frequency of evil spirits intermingling in human affairs, of which more hereafter.

His utter neglect of his mother and his relations, so far as appears through the whole course of his life.

Precepts in hostility with the rules of common life. Lend hoping nothing again, Luke vi, 35. "He that takes away thy coat give him thy cloak also," Matt. v, 40. "Of him who takes away thy goods, ask them not again," Luke vi, 20—34,—xi, 25,—xii, 33. "If he smite thee on the one cheek, turn to him the other cheek also." The forgiveness of injuries, unto seventy times seven. The revengeful St. Paul gives a curious reason for his charity in this respect, quite in his usual character, Romans xii, 20.

The precepts in praise of poverty: As, "blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God; blessed are ye that hunger, for ye shall be filled, &c. in the sermon on the mount. These have a manifest seditious complexion.

"Blessed are ye that mourn, for ye shall be comforted; woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep," Luke vi, 21—25, and other texts about self denial, and taking up the cross. All calculated to cajole the low class.

Again: "take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithall ye shall be clothed. Take no thought for the morrow. Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap," Matt. vi, 25—34. "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin." St. Paul sarcastically alluding to the strict obedience which the other apostles paid to these very convenient precepts, boasts excessively to the Corinthians, of his having labored with his own hands!

These doctrines evidently tend to the practice so diligently followed by the Apostles and their successors, and all the Reverend Divines of every sect, and every country, of living at ease upon the industry and credulity of others. But they are manifestly inconsistent with that conduct which is absolutely necessary to individual comfort, to domestic duties, and to national prosperity. His morality and benevolence was bigoted and confined; I appeal to the whole of the 17th chapter of

John, compared with the first general epistle of John. He declares that he prays not, he cares not for the world but only for his particular disciples. Add his suggestion in favor of voluntary castration, and against marriage. Matt. xix. 12. **TRUTH.**

To be Concluded in our next.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 19, 1828.

FREE PRESS ASSOCIATION.

[The *National Philanthropist*, published in Boston, contained, some two or three months ago, a most outrageous attack on the "*Free Press Association*," which we, in charity for its author, [for we really believed him to be insane,] suffered to pass without animadversion. We speak *literally* when we say, that not one single fact, either positive or inferential, can be detected in the whole communication of this "valuable correspondent," as he is styled by the Editors of the *Philanthropist*. It appears, however, that the *Telescope*, having, for reasons best known to its editor, assisted in circulating the slander, has been addressed on the subject by one, who has probably, been influenced by the old adage, that "silence gives consent," even to falsehood. In publishing this letter, we are requested to state that the two passages in italics, which were probably too pungent for the *pious* editor, or his more pious readers, were inserted in the original.]

To the Editor of the Telescope.

SIR,—I presume your sense of justice and impartiality will induce you to give publicity to a few remarks, by way of reply to an unjustifiable attack on the "*Free Press Association*," of which society I have the honor of being a member; which attack appears in the *Telescope* of the 14th inst.

The passage you have selected for publication, is an extract from a Boston paper, and the name and profession of the author, (a resident of this city,) are no secret: it is as follows: "the infidel Free Press Association of New York, have the place in which they assemble for the worship of Nature, decorated with a portrait of Thomas Paine, together with a painting of Indians, women and children in a state of nature."

Before I proceed to the "head and front of our offending"—a painting of naked Indians, permit me to make one or two remarks on the hacknied word *infidel*, of such convenient application by Christians, when they wish to designate any one who does not believe what he cannot understand—*who takes reason and common sense for his guide, and rejects, with an honest indignation, those absurd and revolting descriptions of the deity, which the Christian faith would palm on his mind, as the most holy and impregnable truths.* Paradoxical, Sir, as the assertion may appear, I hesitate not to affirm, that I can prove the most ranting Methodist, or flaming Baptist, with his infants in hell not a span long, guilty of this dreadful, this damning sin *infidelity*. Do the members of these two sects believe that the world, the whole planetary system which rolls in the boundless, illimitable regions of space, has existed during the countless ages of a past eternity? Do they believe that this globe will in some form or other continue in existence through an eternity, an interminable succession of ages to come? Let them answer these questions in the *negative*, which as good Christians they are bound to do, and I pronounce them decided *infidels*. This is the *true* mean-

ing of the word, *unbelief*,—they are doubtless provided with a *Christian* one.

And now, Sir, for the charge which the *veracious* Dr. R—— has brought against this Association, the exhibiting “a painting of Indians, women and children in a state of nature.” “Oh! shame, where is thy blush!”—that a man, (although a Christian) professing to take notes of the societies proceedings, and to write for public information, should be so far carried away with zeal in the cause of “our holy religion” as to publish a direct and wilful falsehood, is matter both of surprise and regret. Desperate indeed must be the cause, baseless must be the fabric, *save upon the folly and credulity of its votaries*, which is compelled to resort to such pitiful, futile and dishonorable means of defence. But I hasten to conclude.

The painting to which this disciple of the cross alludes, is, doubtless, the one belonging to the owners of the Temple of Arts in Wm. St. where, till very recently, the Association held its meetings, and is said to be taken from a scene described in one of Cooper's novels, “the last of the Mohicans.” Keen indeed must be that vision which could discover any thing of a state of nature, or, as he means, a state of nakedness in this painting; but

“All seems infected, that the infected spy,
As all seems *yellow* to the jaundiced eye.

I shall now dismiss this disingenous, dishonorable opponent, the author of this “lie direct,” by hereby offering him a reward of twenty dollars, to be appropriated to the use of any bible or missionary society he may think proper, if he can prove said painting to be in any respect indecent or unfit for the public eye, (though its remaining in the room was not by request of the Association,) or can produce one line, or one precept ever delivered at the lectures of the Free Press, having for its object the breach of the strictest morality—one expression which could offend the chastest ear, or which, by the most forced construction, could tend to subvert those principles of social order, charity, and good will towards their fellow creatures, which it is the ardent desire of the Free Press Association to cherish and diffuse.

I am Sir, your obed't servant,

C. SAVAGE.

New York, June 22d, 1828.

The following article, from the *Gospel Advocate* of the 5th inst. published at Auburn, speaks the sentiments we have so often expressed as to the advantages which Truth must derive from its enemies throwing off all disguise, and exhibiting themselves in their genuine colours, that we cannot resist the inclination we feel to transfer it to our columns.

“SUNDAY LINE OF STAGES.”

The excitement produced by the efforts of the Presbyterians to *compel* an observance of the Jewish Sabbath, exceeds any thing heretofore known to the people of this state. There remains no doubt on the minds of the reflecting part of the community, that the “new line of stages” is *one* of the measures of the orthodox, which has long been in

preparation, designed as another step in the ladder of their preferment. While the public look upon it in this light, many are astonished at the impudence of those who have thus engaged in a measure designed to limit our freedom and destroy the rights of the people.

But we have been too long conversant with the unhallowed plans and serpentine movements of the orthodox, to be seriously alarmed by their open efforts to obtain power, or to be disappointed at any thing they have done, except it be, at a *premature* development of their unsanctified plans. No man with his eyes open can doubt any longer, that the Presbyterians are zealously engaged in efforts designed to destroy the rights of the people—it were almost treason against truth to deny it. The plan in which they are engaged, therefore, should *encourage*, rather than alarm, the friends of liberal principles; for the clergy and their dupes will defeat themselves. It is to be desired that all their plans may be exhibited in like manner—for the people are now prepared to oppose them; whereas if kept secret a little longer, or disguised under the garb of religion, a few years more and they would have had the power to effect what they have all along so much desired.

Recent transactions have stripped the whole phalanx of those holy conspirators of their covering, and the world knows or may know, that not an *iota* of piety enters into their plan. They have, it is true, pretended that the new line of stages was established for *holy* purposes; but who ever thought that a *spiritual* race is to be run in an “opposition line?” The truth is, they have already employed their “runners” who are not inferior in impudence, profanity, and vulgarity to other gentry of the same profession: In Utica alone, we are informed, they have *four* of the most accomplished; and from the specimen we have seen, it may safely be affirmed that the “piety line” will not fall short of the requisite amount of impudence. But all this will only serve to excite the contempt of all reasonable people, against a plan so truly barefaced and abominably impious.

The following remarks, on the same subject, from the *Cayuga Patriot*, are also deserving a place in Correspondent.

Man has, in every age, been subjected more or less, to the tyrannical influence of priestcraft; and in the present age, and in this free and enlightened country, it reigns with powerful sway.

That religion which depends on money for its support, founded on bigotry, intolerance and superstition, I will forever discard. The same principle that is discoverable in those who are for stopping canal boats and stages from running on the Sabbath, manifests itself in various ramifications, all tending to subvert the liberties of the people. We see the same class of men making repeated efforts to have their religion established by law—forming combinations for the purpose of endeavouring to compel the people to submit to their dictation, in a manner highly injurious to the cause of religious liberty. The attempt to get a law passed to prohibit the running of canal boats on the Sabbath, is well known to our citizens.—Happily, and to the honor of the state be it said, that attempt proved unavailing.

The example of other nations is amply sufficient to admonish us of the danger of giving power to priests. Let us be profited by this example; and look well to our rights. It is easier to prevent the yoke and shackles of priestcraft from being fastened on us while we have the means in our possession to avoid it, than to throw them off when on, rivetted by the screws of relentless tyranny. The time has arrived, in my humble opinion, when it has become necessary that this enemy of our Republic, should be unveiled and exposed in all its naked deformity. I believe that it is not yet too late to put it down by public sentiment; but if suffered to progress uninterruptedly, it will eventually produce a tremendous catastrophe; and it is to be feared the result will be---the destruction of our liberties.

I rejoice that the devotees of priestcraft, (those who are making continual efforts to get a religion *established by law*.) have taken such an open stand. The people cannot now misunderstand their object; and I flatter myself, that the sons and daughters of freedom will arise in their strength, and fearlessly assert, and exercise that privilege which is their birth-right—*Freedom of Conscience*. The line is now clearly drawn. We see the followers of priestcraft and theological delusion, arrayed against the friends of civil and religious liberty: bigots and fanatics, against the supporters of those invaluable blessings so dearly bought in the American Revolution, and happily secured to us by the constitution of our country. Be cautious, fellow-citizens, sacrifice not your independence at the shrine of priestcraft. Set yourselves to work, and assist in exterminating this Bohon Uphas from the fair soil of freedom.

MISCELLANEOUS.

[From the Four Winds.]

THE GOLDEN CALF.

Query. Why are the "Four Winds" continually blowing on orthodox policy?

Answer. Aaron made a calf, and the Israelites worshiped it. Moses took the calf and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it. This was to make them sick of their foolish idolatry, and it had a powerful effect; the Jews always remembered it through every period of their future history, and had a saying among them, that "no affliction ever happened to Israel in which there was not some particle of the dust of the golden calf."

The orthodox have made a calf, and it is a golden one too. The gold of which it was made was collected by travelling agents who have gone round among the people and spoiled them of their ornaments. The way they have done this has been by false statements of the wretchedness of some distant part of the country, where the people are perishing for the bread of life. They have persuaded their hearers that these people cannot be saved but by their liberality, that if they will give their money in sufficient abundance these poor perishing souls may be saved; if not they will perish and their blood be required at their hands. In this way

they have extorted money from their pockets! This money has been thrown into the fire at Andover and has come out a great calf.

The body of this calf is of course the principles of orthodoxy covered over with a sleek hide of something that looks like Arminianism, which is intended to beguile those who are leaning towards that side of the controversy.

The head of this calf is the American Education Society.

The horns of this calf are the ministering funds which they are forming in every town and parish where it is practicable, by which they intend to make themselves independent of the people and push westward, and northward, and southward, like the ram in Daniel's vision.

The right fore leg of this calf is the American Bible Society; the left is the Tract Society.

The right hind leg is the American Home Missionary Society, and the left, the American Board of Foreign Missions.

The tail of this calf is the Sabbath Society, designed merely to hide the less comely parts, and to keep off the flies in the hot summer months.

This calf we are burning and grinding to powder, and strewing the ashes on the waters, for the orthodox to drink and be made sick of it. Perhaps its operations may be something like Dr. Chambers' medicine for the cure of drunkenness. Well, be it so, if while they become sick of the remedy, they are cured of the disease.

The Progress of Christian Superstition.

Concluded from page 383.

Honorius 3d, elected in 1215, by special indulgence, granted the Germans leave to take a glass of wine, after they had said grace at table. Previous to this, the Germans were distinguished for their sobriety, but now became excessively fond of wine, by permission from Rome.

Gregory 9th, in 1227, ordered the bell to ring at the Ave Maria and and at the elevation of the wafer by the priest. From this we may suppose that the people began to slumber, and get tired of so much devotion; it was found necessary therefore to ring bells to rouse them!

Innocent 4th, in 1243, invented the bonnet rogue and Cardinal's red hat, which they must wear. This was very emblematical of the massacres and persecutions, carried on by the church against dissenters and heretics in those days of godliness and devotion.

Urban 4th elected in 1261, appointed a festival in honor of the *Corpus*, or body of Christ, which has been publicly carried about in the shape of a wafer, from that day till this, for popular worship and adoration!

Boniface 8th, made Pope 1294, not satisfied with the plain Tiara, added another crown to it. However, we shall soon see that he was modest, compared with one of his successors, who must have three crowns on his head.

Urban 5th, elected in 1362, added a third crown to his Tiara.—What could induce him to adopt this triple mark of sovereignty, we are at a loss to tell; except he did it in honor of the three persons of the Trinity, whose Lieutenant-general he pretended to be on earth—but we guess, if Jesus Christ with his crown of thorns on his head, or St. Peter with his fisherman's bonnet, had appeared in Rome, they would never known Urban 5th, as their successor.

Urban 6th, made Pope in 1378, instituted a public festival in honor of **Mary's** visit to her cousin **Betty** in **Judea**, about 1400 years before. This was a happy thought of his holiness, and shewed his politeness and devotion to the ladies, who never could expect such honors to have been done to them, by posterity—especially when it was only a gossiping visit.

John 22d became Pope in 1410; and in his day there were three Popes. This shews that the Popedom was not altogether an office of labor and humility; for we find very few among the priesthood, who are not in a hurry to enjoy fat benefices, though they hypocritically say no—*Nolo episcopari!*

Calixtus 3d, appointed a solemn festival in honor of the transfiguration on the mount; a very interesting object to those who lived in the 14th century to be sure, From this it would appear, that all material objects being exhausted, the Popes began to catch at shadows, and bless them, for popular superstition and veneration.

Paul 2d, ordered a public festival in honor of the Virgin **Mary's** presentation, which has been so long neglected by his predecessors, and,

Sixtus 4th, elected in 1471, wrote a treatise on the manner that our **Lady**, the Virgin **Mary** conceived; and after having elucidated this subject, which, we imagine, could be no easy matter for his holiness, he honored it with a solemn and public festival, which is still kept up, by the votaries of **Lady Mary**.

Alexander 6th, of infamous memory, closed the 15th century. It was in his time, and under his auspices, that the inquisition had been established in Spain; an institution which must brand the christian church with a stain that can never be wiped off. At this period, reason began to awaken in Europe, and of course Christianity, for its support, must fly for aid to terror and persecution. A religion, that, from its infancy, was every day growing in idolatry and superstition, as we have seen, became at last so monstrous and frightful, that the Monks themselves got disgusted with it!

Leo 10th, elected in 1513, condemned **Luther** and all his followers, for not thinking as he did. He conferred the title of Defender of the Faith on **Henry 8th** of England, which is still piously retained by **Henry's** successors, and should be doubly confirmed to the present **Solomon** of England, who has zealously promoted so many prosecutions against the authors and publishers of the *Age of Reason*, the *Rights of Man*, &c—These titles have not been given for nothing, by the Popes, when their dissenting brethren are so fond of retaining them.

Paul 3d, elected in 1534, raised and organized the **Jesuits** corps, and that of **St. John** of God, as life guards to holy religion and the church, which now began to be attacked by heretics on all sides. It seems the people began to open their eyes then, just as they do now, and would no longer be kept in the dark—Instead of dead Saints, and Angels, therefore, it was necessary to raise troops to repel the invasion, and, if necessary, to carry the war into the enemy's country.

Pious 5th, in 1565, gave sound proofs of his title by instituting a solemn festival in honor of the **Rosary** or **Beads**: These little stones, no doubt, served in place of bullets, against the enemy, and of course deserved the blessing and adoration of the Clergy.

This Pope has been so extravagant in his charges for making a Saint of a Spaniard, that Philip the 2d who undertook to defray the expenses, declared he would have this fellow and no more sent to Heaven; his name was James, of Alcala. On account of this it is piously believed that no more Spaniards have gone to heaven since that time; for how could they, if the priests had not granted them leave!

Gregory 15th ordered, under pain of eternal damnation, that no person should call in question the purity of Mary's conception, which some infidels, at that time, began to doubt!

Alexander 8th, gloriously closed the 16th, century, by condemning the philosophical sin, or the sin of philosophy! Never, perhaps, was a greater sin than this in the world; for it was, and is still, a sin against Church and Churchman, who cannot bear the sound of reason, or the name of philosophy.

And now, after what has been said, the unprejudiced reader will agree with us, that Christianity has made a most astonishing progress, from its infancy, till the present period, when it seems to be, not only at a stand, but wonderfully on the decline! and indeed, its fall must be infinitely more rapid than its growth, if Reason and Philosophy advance with the same strides they have done, during the latter part of the passed century.

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Free Press Association.—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-Street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Theological* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 20th instant, at 4 o'clock, in the afternoon. The *Scientific* lectures are postponed during the continuance of the warm weather.

Society of Free Enquirers.—This society now holds its meetings in the Long Room No. 163 Chatham-street, where lectures are regularly delivered every Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock.

N. B.—There is an entrance to the room also in James-street.

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